TALL TALES

THE SOUTHWEST

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TALL TALES

of

THE

SOUTHWEST

AMERICANA DESERTA

TALL TALES OF THE SOUTHWEST
An Anthology of Southern and Southwestern Humor—1830-1860
Edited by Franklin J. Meine

To be published in the Fall of 1930
THE LIFE OF JAMES P. BECKWOURTH
by T. D. BONNER
Edited, with an Introduction, by Bernard DeVoto

THE GENTEEL FEMALE
An Anthology
Edited by Clifton J. Furness

THE AMERICAN DEMOCRAT
by JAMES FENIMORE COOPER
Edited by H. L. Mencken

EDITED BY BERNARD DEVOTO

NEW YORK *ALFRED·A·KNOPF* *MCMXXX*

TALL TALES

of

THE

SOUTHWEST

Edited by

FRANKLIN

J

MEINE

An Anthology of Southern
and Southwestern Humor 1830-1860

NEW YORK ALFRED·A·KNOPF MCMXXX

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CONTENTS

Introduction
xv

I
Guilty—But Drunk · *George W. Bradbury*
3

II
The Big Bear of Arkansas · *T. B. Thorpe*
9

III
Going to Bed before a Young Lady · *"M"*
25

IV
How Simon Suggs "Raised Jack" · *Johnson J. Hooper*
31

V
Cousin Sally Dilliard · *Hamilton C. Jones*
41

VI

A Useful Coon-Skin · David Crockett

47

VII

The Knob Dance—A Tennessee Frolic · George W. Harris

55

VIII

Cupping on the Sternum · H. C. L.

65

IX

Ovid Bolus, Esq. · Joseph G. Baldwin

71

X

The Hoosier and the Salt Pile · William T. Thompson

87

XI

Discharged on His Own Recognizance · W. H. Sparks

95

XII

"Pertaters and Ternups" · "Spoondrift"

99

XIII

The Character of a Native Georgian · A. B. Longstreet

105

XIV

The Steamboat Captain Who Was Averse to Racing · George P. Burnham

127

XV

"Old Sense," of Arkansas · C. F. M. Noland

133

XVI

The Militia Company Drill · Oliver H. Prince

139

XVII

Major Jones Pops the Question · William T. Thompson

149

XVIII

Mrs. Yardley's Quilting · George W. Harris

157

XIX

A "Hung" Jury · Joseph M. Field

169

XX

Simon Gets a "Soft Snap" Out of His Daddy · Johnson J. Hooper

175

XXI

Sharp Financiering · Joseph G. Baldwin

185

XXII

Rare Ripe Garden Seed · George W. Harris

189

XXIII

An Artist in Trouble · D. Corcoran

203

XXIV

How the Times Served the Virginians · Joseph G. Baldwin

209

XXV

The Harp of a Thousand Strings · William P. Brannan

235

XXVI

Simon Suggs Becomes Captain · Johnson J. Hooper

241

XXVII

Where the Lion Roareth and the Wang-Doodle Mourneth · William P. Brannan

253

XXVIII

The Fight · A. B. Longstreet

259

XXIX

Col. Hawkins and the Court · Johnson J. Hooper

273

XXX

A Coon-Hunt in a Fency Country · William T. Thompson

281

XXXI

A Quarter Race in Kentucky · C. F. M. Noland

287

XXXII

Shifting the Responsibility · Johnson J. Hooper

299

XXXIII

A Sage Conversation · A. B. Longstreet

305

XXXIV

A Snake-Bit Irishman · George W. Harris

317

XXXV

Captain Suggs and Lieut. Snipes "Court-Martial" Widow Haycock · Johnson J. Hooper

325

XXXVI

Georgia Theatrics · A. B. Longstreet

337

XXXVII

Sicily Burns's Wedding · George W. Harris

343

XXXVIII

McAlpin's Trip to Charleston · Hamilton C. Jones

353

XXXIX

A Bully Boat and a Brag Captain · Sol Smith

359

XL

Old Singletire · Robert Patterson

367

XLI

The Thimble Game · T. W. Lane

373

XLII

That Big Dog Fight at Myers's · P. B. January

385

XLIII

Mississippi Legislature · Anon.

391

XLIV

The Horse-Swap · A. B. Longstreet

399

XLV

Swallowing an Oyster Alive · John S. Robb

409

XLVI

Sut Lovingood's Daddy, Acting Horse · George W. Harris

415

XLVII

Simon Suggs Attends a Camp-Meeting · Johnson J. Hooper

425

XLVIII

Breaking a Bank · Sol Smith

439

XLIX

The Dandy Frightening the Squatter · S. L. C.

447

Appendix A

449

Appendix B

451

Appendix C

455

ILLUSTRATIONS

Simon Suggs
Frontispiece

The Harp of a Thousand Strings
236

Title Page of Original Edition of "Georgia Scenes"
400

INTRODUCTION

I

BEFORE Mark Twain and Artemus Ward it is popularly supposed that there was little or no American humor. The facts are otherwise for Mark Twain's early writings marked the climax of a rich development, rather than the beginning of one. Twain, born in 1835 of Southern parents on the Southwestern frontier, emerged out of a period (1830-60) when the humorous story and the tall tale were characteristic literary productions; and as will be seen from the last story in this collection, Mark at seventeen, setting type in the newspaper print-shop at Hannibal, was a part of that humor and contributed to it. We have lost sight of the life and literature of that earlier era because the Civil War so sharply broke off the past. At the outbreak of the war, Mark had pretty well arrived at maturity—he was twenty-six—and rooted deep in that earlier life carried over a great deal of the old Southern tradition. Instead of opening up a new vein of American humor with his first famous story, *Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog,* in the New York *Saturday Press* (1865), he simply revived a kind of story-telling that had its home and earlier vogue in the genial South before the War. This is not a book about Mark Twain, but it is important to note that Twain was himself saturated with this frontier humor and so offers an approach to the group of Southern humorists who immediately preceded him.

Scattered through the South and Southwest during the forties and fifties there sprang up a picturesque local-color group of humorists who flourished in bar-rooms, on law circuits, on steamboats and in the wide

open spaces. They were not professional humorists, but debonair settlers engaged in various tasks: lawyers, newspaper editors, country gentlemen of family and fortune, doctors, army officers, travellers, actors—who wrote for amusement rather than for gain. "This little sketch," one of them typically prefaces, "was rit with no higher aim than to amuse the idle hours of my friends and if it fails to do that, it's a spilt job." These young men, most of whom were seeking fortune or adventure on the newly-opened, turbulent Southern and Southwestern frontier, were quick to seize upon the comic aspects of the rough life about them, and graphically sketched the humorous and colorful local happenings, the oddities in rustic or pioneer character, and the tall tales that were going the rounds of the locality. These spontaneous, hilarious pencillings, from an academic point of view, may indeed be considered nothing more than rather charcoal sketches. Yet in their way they are masterpieces: realistic, racy, written in a vein of rollicking humor, and thoroughly characteristic in tone, color, and action of that forgotten era. The age, one of the most vivid of American experiences, has no other authentic record in our literature. Nothing is more essentially American than the frontier; and these sketches, humble enough in intent, were the earliest literary realization of the frontier, and, remain its most revealing expression.

II

This early humor of the South had no counterpart in the humor of any other section of the United States. It was distinctly and peculiarly Southern; and it was provincial, wholly local. Even within the South various localities had their own peculiarities of humor which set them off. Georgia wit and humor, like Georgia watermelons, thought Joel Chandler Harris, were *prima facie* Georgian,—they were unique and there was none to compare with them. "The sun, the soil, the air, and even the spring water, seem to have something to do with it." [1]

"In the Southern states," Colonel Henry Watterson observed, "the humor turns upon character and incident. We body forth a personage out of the odds and ends of comic thought and memory, the heel-taps

[1] Harris, J. C. *Stories of Georgia,* p. 240.

of current observance; we clothe this image appropriately, and then put it through a series of amusing adventures. Thus it is that our humor is anecdotal, producing such figures as Ned Brace, the practical Georgia joker; Major Joseph Jones, Esq., of Pineville, Georgia, famous lover and traveller; Captain Simon Suggs, of the 'Tallapoosy Vollantares'; Ovid Bolus, Esq., of the flush times in Alabama and Mississippi; Sut Lovingood, 'ornary' hell-raising mountaineer of the Great Smokies; and the Rev. Hezekiah Bradley, who discoursed on the 'Harp of a Thousand Strings.'

"They flourished years ago, in the good old time of muster days and quarter racing, before the camp-meeting and the barbecue had lost their power and their charm; when men led homely lives, doing their love-making and their law-making as they did their fighting and plowing, in a straight furrow; when there was no national debt multiplying the dangers and magnifying the expenses of distillation in the hills and hollows, and pouring in upon the log-rolling, the quilting, the corn-shucking, and the fish-fry an inquisitorial crew of tax-gatherers and 'snoopers' to spoil the sport and dull the edge of patriotic husbandry." [1]

III

The corner-stone of this early humorous literature was *Georgia Scenes,* 1835, by *A Native Georgian.* The pseudonym was that of Augustus Baldwin Longstreet,[2] a prominent young lawyer and newspaper editor then residing in Augusta. The collected *Scenes* comprised eighteen humorous sketches, describing "scenes, characters and incidents" of life in Georgia during the "first half century of the Republic," that had appeared previously from 1832 to 1835, over the pseudonyms *Hall* and *Baldwin* in Longstreet's local newspaper, *The States Rights Sentinel,* and other local Georgia papers. It is of bibliographical interest to note that the book was first published by Longstreet and printed at the *S. R. Sentinel Office,* Augusta, 1835.[3]

[1] Watterson, Henry. *Oddities in Southern Life and Character,* preface, p. vii.

[2] For a complete discussion of Longstreet and the *Georgia Scenes* see his biography, *Augustus Baldwin Longstreet,* by J. D. Wade, 1927.

[3] See fac-simile of original title-page.

The *Scenes* were hearty humorous sketches, by a clever story teller, of rough backwoods Georgia life and manners. Longstreet did not gloss over the crudities of frontier life, nor did he burlesque them, but with gentlemanly humor vividly described the comic, coarser aspects of the life he knew so well. The *Scenes* were consciously realistic: they showed red-necked Georgia crackers in eye-gouging, nose-biting fights, in coarse horse-trade wrangles, and in capers which even invaded funeral processions. So realistic were they in fact, that Longstreet, an ambitious young politician, published them anonymously, fearing their effects, and later when he became an elderly and godly college president, vowed that he had never written them.

In book form the *Scenes* became so popular that Harper and Brothers, New York, took over its publication and in 1840 issued a "Second Edition," with illustrations, which soon sold 8000 copies. North and South, *Georgia Scenes* was acclaimed widely and with warm enthusiasm. Yale conferred an honorary LL.D. upon its distinguished alumnus. In the South even Poe who admittedly was "not of the merry mood" confessed that, "Seldom—perhaps never in our lives—have we laughed so immoderately over any book as over the one now before us." [1] But Poe did more than merely laugh: he appreciated Longstreet's keen insight into real, contemporary Southern life. The melancholy Poe chuckled and wrote, "The author, whoever he is, is a clever fellow, imbued with a spirit of the truest humor, and endowed moreover with an exquisitely discriminating and penetrative understanding of character in general, and of Southern character in particular. And we do not mean to speak of *human* character exclusively. To be sure, our Georgian is *au fait* here too—he is learned in all things appertaining to the biped without feathers. In regard especially to that class of Southwestern mammalia who come under the generic appellation 'Savagerous wild cats,' he is a very Theophrastus *in duo decimo*. But he is not the less at home in other matters. Of geese and ganders he is the La Bruyère, and of good-for-nothing-horses, the Rochefoucault." [2]

With *Georgia Scenes* Longstreet established a pattern that had a

[1] Poe reviewed *Georgia Scenes* in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, March 1836.

[2] Poe, *Southern Literary Messenger*, March 1836.

profound influence on all subsequent humorous writers of the South. In some instances the tradition was handed down through actual personal contact; it is interesting to note, for example, that it was Longstreet's associate in editing the Augusta *Sentinel* in the early thirties, William T. Thompson, who later secured the services of Joel Chandler Harris for the Savannah *News* in 1871. Longstreet showed the way and aroused a lively interest in the comico-ludicrous aspects of Southern and Southwestern frontier life that was enthusiastically caught up and developed, each in his peculiar way, by Thompson, Thorpe, Hooper, Baldwin, Harris and many others.

But the importance of *Georgia Scenes* was not merely sectional: it was national. In the hands of these writers the humor of the American frontier, the humor we regard as so typically American, developed rapidly and plentifully. In the local newspapers of that period there appeared literally thousands of humorous frontier stories and sketches that went the rounds of the American press. By 1860 this frontier type of American humor—so important to the understanding of John Phœnix, Artemus Ward, and Mark Twain—had been well established.

Longstreet's co-editor on the *Sentinel,* William T. Thompson, soon after (1842–43), as editor of the *Southern Miscellany,* printed a series of letters purporting to come from one Major Joseph Jones, Esq., of Pineville, Georgia, relating in a naïve, jovial fashion the Major's courtship of a neighbor girl, Mary Stallins. These letters were issued in book form in 1844 under the title *Major Jones' Courtship* and became exceedingly popular, reaching an eighth edition in 1847.

In contrast with the *Georgia Scenes* which dealt with a wide range of subjects, *Major Jones' Courtship* is a connected series of episodes woven about the courtship theme, but revealing nevertheless contemporary Southern plantation life, particularly that of the middle-class Georgia planters typified by Major Jones. Unlike the *Scenes,* the *Courtship* contains nothing coarse or "brutal"; Major Jones is a simple, unsophisticated, good-humored Georgia youth who babbles about his love for Mary, and their amusing amatory adventures.

"But Major Jones is a Georgian. He is well to do, and knows a thing

or two, albeit his education in 'grammar' and 'retorick' has been neglected, his character, like his diction, is homespun. He is a thorough rustic, and belongs to a class which is still (1882) very large in the interior of the South." [1] In characters, quaint dialogue, and easy-going humor, the story is distinctively Southern and genuinely Georgian.

The popularity of *Major Jones' Courtship* induced the author to extend the Major's adventures in a series of travel letters (1847), describing scenes, incidents and adventures in a tour from Georgia to Canada, and also induced him to gather into book form a miscellaneous lot of earlier humorous stories and sketches that he had written and printed before the Major Jones stories came out, dealing with the "nether" side of Southern life, the Georgia "Cracker." This latter collection, *Major Jones' Chronicles of Pineville,* embracing sketches of Georgia scenes, incidents, and characters was published in 1845.

The preface to this book reveals exactly the point of view of this whole group of early Southern humorists:

"Encouraged by the favour with which a recent humble attempt to depict some of the peculiar features of the Georgia backwoodsman has been received by the public, some of my friends have persuaded me to publish a few other stories illustrative of similar character, which they knew I had written. Influenced by these persuasions, I determined to brush up my old manuscripts, produce something new of the same sort, and thus endeavor to present to the public a few more interesting specimens of the genus Cracker.'

"I wish it to be understood that I use this term with all due respect. It belongs to a class of good people with whom it has been my destiny to become intimately associated, and I know there is much to admire and respect in their characters. The lineaments of these characters are strongly marked, and they sit so fair, that he who takes rough sketches, as I sometimes do, can readly 'take their picters'; but as a class they are brave, generous, honest, and industrious, and withal, possessed of a sturdy patriotism. The vagabond and the dissolute among them are exceptions to the rule, and in a few generations more, education will have made the mass a great people. When such education will have done all it is destined to effect for the American backwoodsman, it may, and will increase the sum of his happiness and usefulness in the scale of being, but it will at the same time, by polishing away those peculiarities which now mark his manners and language, reduce him to the common level of commonplace people, and make him a less curious 'specimen' for the study of the naturalist. As he now is, however, I have endeavoured, in a small way, to catch his 'manners living as they rise,' and if I have been so fortunate as to succeed, the effort will amuse him, when he meets with it, if it should interest no one else.

[1] Watterson, *Oddities,* p. 134.

"I claim no higher character for my stories—some of which appeared in a literary periodical of limited circulation—than that of mere sketches, designed to amuse those who have a taste for such things, with some slight traits of peculiar character; and it may be to afford the student of human nature a glance at characters not often found in books, or anywhere else, indeed, except in just such places as *'Pineville,'* Georgia."

Georgia Scenes and *Major Jones* pictured the quiet rural life of the old South, with its established and stable social order. In the *Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi* (1853), and the *Adventures of Simon Suggs* (1845), the scene changes to the fast-shifting, turbulent Southwestern frontier. Here from 1835 to 1855 a new country was being opened up; and emigrants came streaming in from all quarters of the Union, drawn to the new frontier by exciting accounts of the fertility of its virgin lands and rumors of profitable enterprise and adventure. It was an ante-type California gold rush in all except the gold.

The *Flush Times,* a collection of frontier character sketches and anecdotes, was designed "to illustrate the periods, the characters, and the phases of society" of that movement. Their author, Joseph G. Baldwin, himself an actor in the humorous and exciting life he so artistically described, was a young lawyer who had emigrated from the Old Dominion in 1836, to settle in North Alabama. His going there was, he said, " 'Urged by hunger and the request of friends.' The gentle momentum of a female slipper, too, it might as well be confessed, added its moral suasion to the more pressing urgencies of breakfast, dinner and supper. To the South West he started because magnificent accounts came from that sunny land of most cheering and exhilarating prospects of fussing, quarrelling, murdering, violation of contracts, swindling, and the whole catalogue of *crimen falsi*—in fine, of a flush tide of litigation in all of its departments, civil and criminal.[1]

"The condition of society may be imagined:—vulgarity—ignorance—fussy and arrogant pretension—unmitigated rowdyism—bullying insolence, if they did not rule the hour *seemed* to wield unchecked dominion. . . . The groceries—*vulgice*—doggeries (where beverages abounded), were in full blast in those days, no village having less than

[1] Baldwin, *Flush Times,* p. 47. For further amusing recital of this frontier life see the sketch in this collection, "How the Times Served the Virginians."

a half dozen all busy all the time: gaming and horse-racing were polite and well patronized amusements. I knew a Judge to adjourn two courts (or court twice) to attend a horse-race, at which he officiated judicially and ministerially, and with more appropriateness than in the judicial chair. Occasionally the scene was diversified by a murder or two which though perpetrated from behind a corner, or behind the back of the deceased, whenever the accused chose to stand his trial, was always found to have been committed in self-defence, securing the homicide of an honorable acquittal *at the hands of his peers.* . . . Profligacy . . . held riotous carnival. Larceny grew not only respectable, but genteel, and ruffled it in all the pomp of purple and fine linen. Swindling was raised to the dignity of the fine arts." [1]

In this setting also was written the *Adventures of Simon Suggs,* 1845,[2] by Johnson J. Hooper, who was, like Longstreet, a prominent young lawyer and newspaper editor, of Alabama. In Simon Suggs, Hooper achieved a powerful character study, bringing to a focus in one character those virulent forces of frontier life. Suggs is a sharp, shrewd swashbuckler, whose whole philosophy "lies snugly in his favorite aphorism—'it is good to be shifty in a new country'—which means that it is right and proper that one should live as merrily and as comfortably as possible at the expense of others; and of the practicability of this in particular instances, the Captain's whole life has been a long series of the most convincing illustrations." [3]

The character of Simon Suggs and his significance for Southern humor have been keenly appreciated by Colonel Watterson. "In Simon Suggs," said he, "we have the Vulgarian of the South 'done' to use his own elegant phraseology, 'to a cracklin.' . . . No one who is at all familiar with the provincial life of the South can fail to recognize the 'points'

[1] *ibid.* p. 85, p. 89.

[2] Carey and Hart, Philadelphia. A small portion of *Simon Suggs* and one or two of the other sketches in the volume had already appeared in Hooper's paper, *The East Alabamian,* Lafayette, Chambers County; and in the New York *Spirit of the Times.* A second volume of humorous sketches by Hooper, *A Ride with Old Kit Kuncker,* was published by Slade in Tuscaloosa, 1849. This collection is more generally known by the title of the Philadelphia reprint, *Widow Rugby's Husband,* A. Hart, 1851.

[3] Hooper, *Simon Suggs,* p. 12.

of this sharp and vulgar, sunny and venal swashbuckler. As serio-comic as Sellers, as grotesque as Shingle, he possesses an originality all his own, and never for a moment rises above or falls below it. He is a gambler by nature, by habit, by preference, by occupation. Without a virtue in the world, except his good-humor and his self-possession, there is something in his vices, his indolence, his swagger, his rogueries, which, in spite of the worthlessness of the man and the dishonesty of his practices, detains and amuses us. He is a representative character . . . true to nature . . . graphic . . . picturesque." [1]

Strikingly different from any of the foregoing books were the *Sut Lovingood Yarns*,[2] 1867, by George W. Harris, of Knoxville, East Tennessee. Although the *Yarns* did not appear in book form until after the Civil War, Harris was immediately contemporary with this whole group of early Southern humorists—Longstreet, Thompson, Hooper, Baldwin,—his first humorous sketch having appeared in the New York *Spirit of the Times* in 1845.[3] Harris lived practically all his life in the "Nobs" of "Old Knox," and loved the free, rough life of the Great Smoky Mountains and the French Broad and Tennessee Rivers. He was a versatile genius: silversmith, expert worker in all metals, journalist, inventor, hunter, humorist; and in his youth, like Mark Twain, worked on a river steamboat. Harris was a captain; Clemens, a few years later, a pilot.

Sut Lovingood is a unique and original character in American humor. He is a rough, lanky, uncouth mountaineer of the Great Smokies, whose sole ambition in life is to raise "pertickler" hell. As he says of himself: "Every critter what hes ever seed me, ef he has sence enuff to hide from a cummin kalamity, ur run from a muskit, jis' knows five great facks in my case es well es they knows the road to their moufs.

[1] Watterson, *Oddities*, pages 39, 134, adapted.

[2] Dick and Fitzgerald, New York, copyright 1867. Dick and Fitzgerald was a cheap publishing house, specializing in "Books for the People," and like the Petersons of Philadelphia usually did not date their title-pages. I have never seen a copy of *Sut* with dated title-page. I suspect an earlier edition perhaps in Cincinnati in pamphlet form. At the time of his death, 1869, Harris had ready for the printer a second collection of *Sut* stories but these seem to have disappeared.

[3] *The Knob Dance*. See p. 55. The first Sut Lovingood yarn, *Sut Lovingood's Daddy Acting Horse*, appeared originally in the *Spirit*, 1854.

Fustly, that I haint got nara a soul, nuffin but a whisky proof gizzard, sorter like the wus half ove a ole par ove saddil bags, *Seconly,* that I'se too durn'd a fool to cum even onder millertary lor. *Thudly,* that I hes the longes' par ove laigs ever hung to eny cackus, 'sceptin' only ove a grandaddy spider, an' kin beat *him* a usen ove em jis' es bad es a skeer'd dog kin beat a crippled mud turkil. *Foufly,* that I kin chamber more cork-screw kill-devil whisky, an' stay on aind, than enything 'sceptin' only a broad bottum'd chun. *Fivety,* an' las'ly, kin git intu more durn'd misfortnit skeery scrapes, than enybody, an' then run outen them faster, by golly, nor enybody." [1] Sut relished the prospect of driving a mad bull into a wedding party, or poking out a hornets' nest into a negro camp-meeting, or stuffing a bag of lizards up the "passun's britches-laig when he were a-ravin' ontu his tip-toes, an a-poundin' the pulpit wif his fis'." Such were Sut's pranks, with his constant companion, his whisky flask, slung at his side.

Sut's humor is always robust and hearty; sometimes rough, possibly coarse, yet he is vastly funny; and the *Yarns* are full of comic situation, plot and phrase. Sut reveals the author's spirit in his keen delight for Hallowe'en *fun,*—there is no ulterior motive (except occasionally Sut's desire to "get even"), no rascality, no gambling, no sharping as in *Simon Suggs* or the *Flush Times.* Sut is simply the genuine naïve roughneck mountaineer riotously bent on raising hell.

Harris makes no pretense of literary style. He tells his story in his own way directly and swiftly. Although writers of his time generally tacked morals to most of their stories, Harris was satisfied to tell a story which tickled men's funny-bones and consigned morals to "suckit" riders. The *Yarns* are fresh, racy and packed with action. Harris rises above the level of merely objective description of humorous characters or incidents, and concocts with "owdacious" flights of fancy all sorts of grotesque schemes to display Sut's peculiar talents. For vivid imagination, comic plot, Rabelaisian touch, and sheer *fun,* the *Sut Lovingood Yarns* surpass anything else in American humor.

In addition to these single works there were three notably good collections of tall tales; two edited by Wm. T. Porter, editor of the New

[1] Harris, *Sut Lovingood Yarns,* p. 172.

York *Spirit of the Times, The Big Bear of Arkansas,* 1845, and *The Quarter Race in Kentucky,* 1846; and a third edited by T. A. Burke, a Georgia journalist and humorous writer, *Polly Peablossom's Wedding,* (*c.* 1851). Each collection contained from twenty to thirty stories or sketches, by approximately as many writers, that had achieved popularity in going the rounds of the press for the previous five or ten years. These tall tales touched every phase from the mildly humorous to the utterly ludicrous in Southern and Southwestern frontier life. Of all these stories the most notable perhaps was T. B. Thorpe's *Big Bear of Arkansas* (1841),[1] which was characteristically Western and vastly amusing. It was a match for Münchhausen.

"Stranger," said the man of Arkansaw, "it took five niggers and myself to put that carcase (of the big *bar*) on a mule's back. . . . 'Twould astonish you to know how big he was: I made a bed-spread of his skin, and the way it used to cover my mattress, and leave several feet on each side to tuck up, would have delighted you. It was in fact a creation bar, and if it had lived in Samson's time, and had met him, in a fair fight, it would have licked him in the twinkling of a dice box."

The "Big Bar" was typical of the whoppers that were told when hunters and frontiersmen gathered in bar-rooms and sat around camp fires. When it was published, many similar yarns followed it into print. It is interesting to note the similarity of these tall tales of the early frontier to the yarns still popular in such regions as the Colorado mining towns, the mountains of Kentucky, and the North woods.[2]

IV

The subjects of these tales and humorous sketches are fairly typical

[1] *The Big Bear of Arkansas* first appeared in the New York *Spirit of the Times,* 1841 March 27. It was later reprinted in the collection of that title edited by Wm. T. Porter (1845), and also included in Thorpe's own volume of collected sketches, *The Hive of the Bee-Hunter* (1854).

[2] Witness the *Tall Tales of the Kentucky Mountains* by Percy Mackaye, the *Paul Bunyan* yarns; and note also the stories about Mike Fink, the last of the Ohio River keel-boatmen which, although earlier, are of much the same nature. A collection of Mike Fink yarns is now in course of preparation by Mr. Walter Blair, of the University of Chicago, and the writer.

of the whole Southern and Southwestern group of picturesque local-color humorists who flourished in the thirties, forties and fifties. They touched on the most entertaining subjects imaginable, the social life of their times; and yet these faithful and delightful pictures of those times have been elegantly ignored by most of our writers on American history. They are a treasury, inexhaustible and untouched, of information about the life of the frontier; and yet even social history has ignored them. The indifference of historians is matched by that of students of American literature, who have been, for the most part, either ignorant of this field or superior to it.

The range of subjects is indicated by the following rough groupings,—

1. *Sketches of local customs*
   Shooting matches, gander pullings, horse races, militia drills, quiltings, frolics
2. *Courtships and weddings*
3. *Law circuits and political life*
   The bench and bar, legislatures in the frontier states, stump speeches and buncombe political electioneering, the circuit courts, with all their "attractions of criminal trials, poker-playing lawyers, political caucuses and possible monkey-shows"
4. *Hunting stories*
   The "Big Bears," the bee hunters, turkey running, coon hunts, ferocious "painters" (panthers)
5. *Oddities in Character*
6. *Travel*
   Steamboat life on the Ohio and Mississippi, the new railroads, the rustic in the big city
7. *Frontier medical stories*
   Visits in the wilderness, cupping, pulling teeth, surgery with Bowie knives
8. *Gambling*
9. *Varieties of religious experience*
   Circuit riding preachers, negro camp-meetings, Millerites, Mormons, revivalist meetings, burlesque sermons
10. *Fights*

v

These stories and sketches appeared originally in newspapers and popular periodicals. American humor has always been a spontaneous part of everyday American life; and so the newspaper, chronicler of daily doings and local life, has offered a quick and easy vehicle for all manner of humorous anecdotes, stories and tall tales. The American newspaper as we know it today—the "penny press"—began gathering momentum shortly after 1830; and during the period 1830–60, especially in the South and Southwest, its growth was notably rapid. Stories of steamboat life on the Ohio and Mississippi, and tall tales of the frontier naturally and quickly found their way to the flourishing river-town dailies of New Orleans, Cincinnati, Louisville and St. Louis. Many a smaller community that boasted a job-print-shop and a young lawyer or printer with an itch to be an editor, supported a local news-sheet featuring humorous sketches. Humorous material was always in demand; and so the growth of the newspaper encouraged the local humorist. Not infrequently the humorist in turn scored a national reputation for his paper. The *Georgia Scenes,* it will be remembered, were contributed by Longstreet to his own and other local Georgia papers. So too, Hooper's *Simon Suggs* and Thompson's *Major Jones* first appeared locally—to mention only a few. Once in print these tales and sketches went the rounds of the American press, and frequently were later gathered into book form.

The most popular humorous journal of this period was the New York *Spirit of the Times,* founded and edited by William T. Porter, 1831–56. As its subtitle indicated, it was a weekly *Chronicle of the Turf, Agriculture, Field Sports, Literature and the Stage.* Started originally as a sporting journal, it had become by 1845 the outstanding humorous weekly as well, and had a national circulation.

"The novel design and scope of the *Spirit of the Times* soon fixed attention," wrote its editor, Wm. T. Porter, in 1845,[1] "and ere long it became the nucleus of a new order of literary talent. In addition to correspondents who described with equal felicity and power the stirring incidents of the chase and turf, it enlisted another and still more numerous class, who furnished most valuable and interesting

[1] Porter, *Big Bear of Arkansas,* Preface.

reminiscences of the pioneers of the far West—sketches of thrilling scenes and adventures in that then comparatively unknown region, and the peculiar and sometimes fearful characteristics of the 'squatters' and early settlers. Many of these descriptions were wrought up in a masterly style; and in the course of a few years a generous feeling of emulation sprang up in the South and Southwest, prompted by the same impulses, until at length the correspondents of the *Spirit of the Times* comprised a large majority of those who have subsequently distinguished themselves in this novel and original walk of literature."

After Porter's death, George Wilkes, associate editor of *Porter's Spirit of the Times*,[1] furnished the following interpretative sketch [2] of Porter and the *Spirit of the Times:* "William Porter," he said, "moved among the Livingstons, Hamptons, Stevenses, Stocktons, Joneses, Waddells, Longs, etc., making all happy by his cheerful spirit, and distributing favor by his presence, rather than receiving patronage. The merit of his paper, and the high character of these voluntary associations, not only drew around him the most distinguished writers and correspondents of the time, both at home and from foreign lands, but brought out a new class of writers, and created a style which may be denominated an American literature—not the august, stale, didactic, pompous, bloodless method of the magazine pages of that day; but a fresh, crisp, vigorous, elastic, graphic literature, full of force, readiness, actuality and point, which has walked up to the telegraph, and hardly been invigorated or improved by even the terse and emphatic lightning. This literature was not stewed in the closet, or fretted out at some pale, pensioned laborer's desk, but sparkled from the cheerful leisure of the easy scholar—poured in from the emulous officer in the barracks, or at sea—emanated spontaneously from the jocund poet—and flowed from every mead, or lake, or mountain—in the land where the rifle or the rod was known."

The purely humorous story, as distinguished from the mildly humorous sporting sketch, and the tall tale from the frontier were entirely congenial to the sporting interests of the *Spirit;* and its columns were crowded full of fresh, original and facetious articles from the raciest pens of the country. Its contributors were drawn from all walks of life,

[1] In 1856 Wm. T. Porter left the editorship of the old *Spirit* to start his own journal, *Porter's Spirit of the Times.*

[2] From a memorial article on Porter by Wilkes in *Porter's Spirit,* 1858 July 24.

lawyers, explorers, doctors, journalists, river boatmen, officers of frontier Army posts, editors, and even members of Congress. In February 1851 Porter boasted eighteen correspondents in both houses of Congress. Porter with his genial disposition and love of laughter gathered about him, both as contributors and as personal friends, some of the liveliest wags of that day,—men like T. B. Thorpe, Johnson J. Hooper, Wm. T. Thompson, Sol Smith, C. F. M. Noland, J. M. Field, George W. Harris, and literally hundreds of other humorous writers throughout Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas. In addition to original stories the *Spirit* reprinted the best yarns from such papers as the New Orleans *Picayune,* the St. Louis *Reveille,* the Montgomery *Mail,* the Cincinnati *News,* the Louisville *Courier,*—to mention only a very few of the "snappiest" newspapers that were inexhaustible sources of humorous stories and American oddities. The number of stories in this collection that appeared originally or as reprints in the *Spirit,* as noted in the footnotes, will serve to show how William T. Porter through the medium of the *Spirit of the Times* fostered and encouraged what has appropriately been called the Big Bear school of American humor.[1]

VI

These early frontier humorists have a two-fold importance for American literature: they were our first realists and they have exerted a far-reaching influence on later American humorists, notably Mark Twain.

Beginning with Longstreet this whole group of Southern and Southwestern humorists were realists. In the preface to his *Georgia Scenes* Longstreet wrote, "They [the sketches] consist of nothing more than fanciful combinations of real incidents and characters; and throwing into those scenes, which would be otherwise dull and insipid, some personal incident or adventure of my own, real or imaginary, as it would best suit my purpose; usually real, but happening at different times and under different circumstances from those in which they are here represented." [2]

Georgia Scenes, aside from being the first Southern humorous mas-

[1] DeVoto, Bernard, *Saturday Review,* 1929 June 1.

[2] Longstreet, *Georgia Scenes,* Preface. The italics are Longstreet's.

terpiece, was the first realistic interpretation of Southern character and manners, and it was recognized as a far more truthful and satisfactory picture than the old romantic treatments that preceded it. "The romancers of the Old South wrote extravagantly of the cavaliers, the chivalry, the noble lords and beautiful ladies of the past, but the humorists described lovingly the Jack-legged lawyer, the gambling, lying renegade, the simple but shrewd backwoodsman and the unadorned, bashful country lass of the present. The humorists were the realists, and with all their exaggeration, probably drew a truer picture of life than the romanticists." [1]

In the wake of Longstreet followed Thompson, Hooper, Harris, Thorpe, Sol Smith, and many other local-color humorists who like Longstreet wrote in a boldly realistic vein. Their humor, spontaneously bubbling forth from everyday life, dealt with *real* incidents and *real* characters. With the gigantic exaggeration of the tall tale, the use of dialect and grotesque dialogue, leisurely digressions, and surprising twists, these frontier humorists developed the characteristic "tricks" of American humor; and it was this typical humor of the wide open spaces that prepared the way for the "Wild Humorist of the Pacific Slope."

"It was this humor—the humor of the South and Southwest— to which Mark Twain was born.[2] From his boyhood he heard it from the mouths of rivermen and wherever the villagers talked together in the leisurely waterside town of Hannibal. Through the printing shop where he was apprenticed and the office of his brother's newspaper passed the flood of 'exchanges' from all over the county. Editors and devils laughed over the productions of 'J. Cypress Jr.,' 'Sugartail,' or 'Major Jones,' and then reprinted them, mostly without credit. A good story might ripple from New Orleans to New York and back again in twenty or thirty reprintings. This popularity was significant to a young printer who would some day experiment with literature at the other end of the case. Nor was he ever out of touch with it, for in St. Louis, Philadelphia, New York, Cincinnati and Keokuk, where he practised his trade, the same papers published the same sort of literature and were accorded the same popularity. Later, on the steamboats, the papers were available and, by now, the more ambitious of their productions were bound up in paperbacks and sold to the travellers whose literary taste invariably offended British tourists.

"It was a humor instinct with the life of the frontier, wild and robust and male. Most of all, it gave to young Sam Clemens the interesting example of material immediately at hand translated into literature or, perhaps, into writing on the

[1] King, J. L., *Dr. George William Bagby,* 127, p. 62.

[2] Summarized from *Mark Twain: A Preface,* by Bernard DeVoto (in preparation). Mr. DeVoto has kindly summarized this passage for use in this introduction.

threshold of literature. The life here pictured had been his; the characters were men and women whose counterparts he saw every day. These people, then, could be written about! When young Sam Clemens took to writing, he had to look for a model no farther than the nearest newspapers and for material no farther than the boiler deck. Mr. Meine's excavation of the earliest sketch known to have been Mark Twain's, therefore, inevitably fits into the *genre*. Mark Twain was utilizing the material at hand in the way that had been shown him.

"Consider the austere ideal of justice upheld by Captain Summons of the steamboat *Dr. Franklin,* in the sketch called 'Breaking a Bank.' Always solicitous of the comfort and enjoyment of his passengers, he is 'determined that they shall amuse themselves as they d—n please.' He scrupulously assists at the Sabbath services of clergymen travelling on his boat, and just as wholeheartedly puts himself at the disposal of those who care to dance or 'pass the time in playing poker.' Dancers, players, or parsons, they have the captain's good will and shall drink with him. 'All sorts of passengers are accommodated on the *Dr. Franklin*—the rights of none are suffered to be infringed.' A group of revivalists board the boat and proceed to hold services day and night, gravely protected by Captain Summons from disturbance by unbelievers. Meanwhile, to the shocked displeasure of the godly, other passengers are engaged in gambling. The circuit riders wait on the Captain and request him to put a stop to this immorality . . . Clearly, we are dealing with a Mark Twain conception. The situation is his, and Captain Summons may well be a foretaste of Captain Ned Blakely or even of Captain Stormfield. The conviction is reinforced by Captain Summons' reply to the clergymen:

" 'Gentlemen, amuse yourselves as you like; preach and pray to your hearts' content—none shall interfere with your pious purposes; some like that sort of thing, *I* have no objection to it. These men prefer to amuse themselves with cards; let them —they pay their passage as well as you, gentle*men,* and have as much right to *their* amuse*ments* as you have to *yours,* and they shall not be disturbed. Preach, play cards, dance cotillions–do what you like, *I* am agreeable; only understand that all games, preaching among the rest, must cease at ten o'clock.'

"The voice is unquestionably the drawl of Mark Twain, the disarming humor that masked the most penetrating knowledge of 'the damned human race' yet revealed in American literature? So it would seem. And yet 'Breaking a Bank' is only a typical item in this widely diffused, sub-literary humor of the frontier. It is by Sol Smith, the actor-manager, and was published in 1846 in *The Quarter Race in Kentucky,* edited by Wm. T. Porter.

"If Mark's earliest recovered sketch belongs to this literature, his far Western period displays a flood of it. 'The Massacre at Dutch Nick's' and 'The Petrified Man' are typical 'tall tales' and might have appeared in *The Spirit of the Times* as fittingly as in the Virginia City *Enterprise.* He had found other mediums of humor when he reached San Francisco, but he filled columns of the *Californian* with similar tales, some his own invention, others long weathered in newsprint or in pilot houses. In Jim Gillis' cabin on Jackass Hill he either did or did not meet the history of the jumping frog. But at least he later remembered that he did, and whether in his pocket or someone else's, the frog had made the journey from the Mississippi bottoms to Calaveras County. With its publication, the 'tall tale' reached a kind of climax, having climbed from anecdotal folk humor to universality. But Mark Twain was not done with it. The device served him handsomely in *Innocents Abroad.* By *Roughing It* he had moulded it into a sort of narrative interlude, such as the story of the cat who ate coconut, the genuine Mexican plug, and that other cat at Jackass Hill who was named Tom Quartz. Through all his books thereafter he makes use of the framework, constantly refining it and constantly enriching it

with the flashes of human insight that give his characters body and breath. As late as *Joan of Arc,* the Paladin is richly embroidering his inventions in a manner that comes straight from the foibles of river folk glimpsed from the door of a pilot-house and straight from the pages of forgotten newspapers over which men had laughed along the river within the hearing of Sam Clemens, printer's devil . . . It was not only the mechanism of humor that these vanished writers gave him. So far as literary parentage is not a fiction, so far as there is any truth in notions of literary influence, these humble humorists made a realist of Mark Twain."

Limitation of time, of period covered, and of space have automatically excluded much equally interesting material. This period (1830–60) really does not include Bill Arp (Chas. H. Smith), Mozis Addums (Geo. W. Bagby) or Philemon Perch (Richard M. Johnston), although each of these writers as young men had begun writing shortly before 1860. Their characteristic work came later; and none is included here. Many good yarns have been crowded out for lack of space, especially some of the longer ones. The fugitive character of newspaper exchanges and the general practice of writing over a pseudonym have made both the source and authorship of many stories impossible of identification, without intensive study of local history. If anyone can shed light on sources or pseudonyms and omitted or erroneous material the writer will be only too glad to hear from him.[1]

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[1] The writer wishes to express his sincere thanks to Mr. Bernard DeVoto for his generous contribution to this introduction and also for his constant encouragement and numerous suggestions in the preparation of the whole anthology. K. M. S. (Mr. Kurt M. Stein of Chicago) has brought to my attention several of these selections. Mr. Walter Blair, of the University of Chicago, has been kind enough to help in shaping up the introduction.

GUILTY
but—
DRUNK

GEORGE W. BRADBURY

This story appeared originally in the Cincinnati News, *1847, and was reprinted in the* Spirit of the Times, *1847 March 20. The original title was Practical Jokes and Bad Liquor. It was one of the most popular of the early humorous stories, frequently reprinted and retold on the stage, a favorite of Dan Marble's.*

GUILTY
but—
DRUNK

GEORGE W. BRADBURY

MANY YEARS ago, while the State of Georgia was still in its infancy, an eccentric creature named Brown was one of its circuit judges. He was a man of ability, of inflexible integrity, and beloved and respected by all the legal profession. But he had one fault. His social qualities would lead him, despite his judgment, into occasional excesses. In travelling the circuit, it was his habit, the night before opening court, to get "comfortably corned." If he couldn't succeed while operating upon his own hook, the members of the bar would generally turn in and help him.

It was in the spring of the year; taking his wife in the old-fashioned carry-all, the Judge journeyed some forty miles, and reached a village where court was to be opened the next day. He took quarters with a relation of his better half, by whom the presence of an official dignitary was considered a high honor. After supper, he strolled over to the only tavern in the town, where he found many of his old friends, called to the place, like himself, on important professional business, and who were properly glad to meet him.

"Gentlemen," said the Judge, "'t is quite a long time since we have enjoyed a glass together. Let us take a drink all round. Of course, Sterritt (addressing the landlord), you have better liquor than you had

the last time we were here; the stuff you had then was not fit to give a dog!"

Sterritt, who had charge of the house, pretended that everything was right, and so they went to work. It is unnecessary to enlarge upon a drinking bout in a country tavern; it will quite answer our purpose to state that somewhere in the region of midnight the Judge wended his very *devious* way towards his temporary home. About the time he was leaving, however, some younger barristers, fond of a "practical," and not much afraid of the bench, transferred all the silver spoons of Sterritt to the Judge's coat pocket.

It was eight o'clock Monday morning that the Judge rose. Having indulged in the process of ablution and abstersion, and partaken of a cheerful and refreshing breakfast, he went to his room to prepare himself for the duties of the day.

"Well, Polly," said he to his wife, "I feel much better than I expected to feel after that frolic of last night."

"Ah, Judge," said she, reproachfully, "you are getting too old; you ought to leave off that business."

"Ah, Polly! what's the use of talking?"

It was at this precise instant that the Judge, having put on his overcoat, was proceeding, according to his custom, to give his wife a parting kiss, that he happened, in thrusting his hand into his pocket, to lay hold of Sterritt's spoons. He jerked them out. With an expression of horror he exclaimed,—

"My God! Polly!"

"What on earth's the matter, Judge?"

"Just look at these spoons!"

"Dear me, where d'ye get them?"

"Get them? Don't you see the initials on them?"—extending them toward her—*"I stole them!"*

"Stole them, Judge?"

"Yes, stole them!"

"My dear husband, it can't be possible! From whom?"

"From Sterritt, over there; his name is on them."

"Good heavens! how could it happen?"

"I know very well, Polly—I was very drunk when I came home, wasn't I?"

"Why, Judge, you know your old habit when you get among those lawyers."

"But was I very drunk?"

"Yes, *you was.*"

"Was I *remarkably* drunk when I got home, Mrs. Brown?"

"Yes, Judge, drunk as a fool, and forty times as stupid."

"I thought so," said the Judge, dropping into a chair in extreme despondency. "I knew it would come to that at last. I have always thought that something bad would happen to me; that I should do something very wrong; kill somebody in a moment of passion, perhaps; but I never imagined that I could be mean enough to be guilty of deliberate larceny!"

"But, there may be some mistake, Judge?"

"No mistake, Polly. I know very well how it all came about. That fellow, Sterritt, keeps the meanest sort of liquor, and always did; liquor mean enough to make a man do any sort of a mean thing. I have always said it was mean enough to make a man steal, and now I have a practical illustration of the fact!" and the poor old man burst into tears.

"Don't be a child," said his wife, wiping away the tears. "Go like a man, over to Sterritt, tell him it was a little bit of a frolic. Pass it off as a joke; go and open court, and nobody will ever think of it again."

A little of the soothing system operated upon the Judge, as such things usually do; his extreme mortification was finally subdued, and over to Sterritt's he went with a tolerable face. Of course, he had but little difficulty in settling with him; for aside from the fact that the Judge's integrity was unquestionable, Sterritt had an inkling of the joke that had been played. The Judge took his seat in court; but it was observed that he was subdued and melancholy, and that his mind frequently wandered from the business before him. There was a lack of the sense and intelligence that usually characterized his proceedings.

Several days passed and the business of the court was drawing towards a close, when one morning a tough citizen was arraigned on a charge of stealing. After the clerk had read the indictment to him, he put the question:—

"Guilty, or not guilty?"

"Guilty—*but drunk,*" answered the prisoner.

"What's that plea?" exclaimed the Judge, who was half dozing on the bench.

"He pleads guilty, but says he was drunk," replied the clerk.

"What's the charge against the man?"

"He is indicted for grand larceny."

"What's the case?"

"May it please your honor," said the prosecuting attorney, "the man is regularly indicted for stealing a large sum from the Columbus Hotel."

"He is, hey? and he pleads"—

"He pleads guilty, *but drunk!*"

The Judge was now fully aroused.

"Guilty, *but drunk!* That is a most extraordinary plea. Young man, you are certain you were drunk?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where did you get your liquor?"

"At Sterritt's."

"Did you get none nowhere else?"

"Not a drop, sir."

"You got drunk on his liquor, and afterwards stole his money?"

"Yes, sir."

"Mr. Prosecutor," said the Judge, "do me the favor to enter a *nolle prosequi* in that man's case. That liquor of Sterritt's is mean enough to make a man do anything dirty. *The court got drunk on it the other day and stole all of Sterritt's spoons!* Release the prisoner, Mr. Sheriff; I adjourn the court."

THE BIG BEAR
of
ARKANSAS

T. B. THORPE, ESQ. OF LOUISIANA

This tall tale first appeared in the
New York Spirit of the Times, *1841.*
See Introduction for critical comment.

THE BIG BEAR of ARKANSAS

T. B. THORPE, ESQ.

A STEAMBOAT on the Mississippi frequently, in making her regular trips, carries between places varying from one to two thousand miles apart; and as these boats advertise to land passengers and freight at "all intermediate landings," the heterogeneous character of the passengers of one of these up-country boats can scarcely be imagined by one who has never seen it with his own eyes. Starting from New Orleans in one of these boats, you will find yourself associated with men from every state in the Union, and from every portion of the globe; and a man of observation need not lack for amusement or instruction in such a crowd, if he will take the trouble to read the great book of character so favourably opened before him. Here may be seen jostling together the wealthy Southern planter, and the pedlar of tin-ware from New England—the Northern merchant, and the Southern jockey—a venerable bishop, and a desperate gambler—the land speculator, and the honest farmer—professional men of all creeds and characters—Wolvereens, Suckers, Hoosiers, Buckeyes, and Corn-crackers, beside a "plentiful sprinkling" of the half-horse and half-alligator species of men, who are peculiar to "old Mississippi," and who appear to gain a livelihood simply by going up and down the river.

In the pursuit of pleasure or business, I have frequently found myself in such a crowd.

On one occasion, when in New Orleans, I had occasion to take a trip of a few miles up the Mississippi, and I hurried on board the well-known "high-pressure-and-beat-every-thing" steamboat *Invincible,* just as the last note of the last bell was sounding; and when the confusion and bustle that is natural to a boat's getting under way had subsided, I discovered that I was associated in as heterogeneous a crowd as was ever got together. As my trip was to be of a few hours' duration only, I made no endeavours to become acquainted with my fellow passengers, most of whom would be together many days. Instead of this, I took out of my pocket the "latest paper," and more critically than usual examined its contents; my fellow passengers at the same time disposed themselves in little groups. While I was thus busily employed in reading, and my companions were more busily employed in discussing such subjects as suited their humours best, we were startled most unexpectedly by a loud Indian whoop, uttered in the "social hall," that part of the cabin fitted off for a bar; then was to be heard a loud crowing, which would not have continued to have interested us—such sounds being quite common in that place of spirits—had not the hero of these windy accomplishments stuck his head into the cabin and hallooed out, "Hurra for the Big Bar of Arkansaw!" and then might be heard a confused hum of voices, unintelligible, save in such broken sentences as "horse," "screamer," "lightning is slow," &c. As might have been expected, this continued interruption attracted the attention of every one in the cabin; all conversation dropped, and in the midst of this surprise the "Big Bar" walked into the cabin, took a chair, put his feet on the stove, and looking back over his shoulder, passed the general and familiar salute of "Strangers, how are you?" He then expressed himself as much at home as if he had been at "the Forks of Cypress," and "perhaps a little more so." Some of the company at this familiarity looked a little angry, and some astonished; but in a moment every face was wreathed in a smile. There was something about the intruder that won the heart on sight. He appeared to be a man enjoying perfect health and contentment: his eyes were as sparkling as diamonds, and good-natured to simplicity. Then his perfect confidence in

himself was irresistibly droll. "Perhaps," said he, "gentlemen," running on without a person speaking, "perhaps you have been to New Orleans often; I never made *the first visit before,* and I don't intend to make another in a crow's life. I am thrown away in that ar place, and useless, that ar a fact. Some of the gentlemen thar called me *green*—well, perhaps I am, said I, *but I arn't so at home;* and if I ain't off my trail much, the heads of them perlite chaps themselves wern't much the hardest; for according to my notion, they were real *know-nothings,* green as a pumpkin-vine—couldn't, in farming, I'll bet, raise a crop of turnips: and as for shooting, they'd miss a barn if the door was swinging, and that, too, with the best rifle in the country. And then they talked to me 'bout hunting, and laughed at my calling the principal game in Arkansaw poker, and high-low-jack. 'Perhaps,' said I, 'you prefer chickens and rolette'; at this they laughed harder than ever, and asked me if I lived in the woods, and didn't know what *game* was? At this I rather think I laughed. 'Yes,' I roared, and says, 'Strangers, if you'd asked me *how we got our meat* in Arkansaw, I'd a told you at once, and given you a list of varmints that would make a caravan, beginning with the bar, and ending off with the cat; that's *meat* though, not game.' Game, indeed, that's what city folks call it; and with them it means chippen-birds and shite-pokes; maybe such trash live in my diggens, but I arn't noticed them yet: a bird any way is too trifling. I never did shoot at but one, and I'd never forgiven myself for that, had it weighed less than forty pounds. I wouldn't draw a rifle on any thing less than that; and when I meet with another wild turkey of the same weight I will drap him."

"A wild turkey weighing forty pounds!" exclaimed twenty voices in the cabin at once.

"Yes, strangers, and wasn't it a whopper? You see, the thing was so fat that it couldn't fly far; and when he fell out of the tree, after I shot him, on striking the ground he bust open behind, and the way the pound gobs of tallow rolled out of the opening was perfectly beautiful."

"Where did all that happen?" asked a cynical-looking Hoosier.

"Happen! happened in Arkansaw: where else could it have happened, but in the creation state, the finishing-up country—a state where the *sile* runs down to the centre of the 'arth, and government gives you a title

to every inch of it? Then its airs—just breathe them, and they will make you snort like a horse. It's a state without a fault, it is.

"Excepting mosquitoes," cried the Hoosier.

"Well, stranger, except them; for it ar a fact that they are rather *enormous,* and do push themselves in somewhat troublesome. But, stranger, they never stick twice in the same place; and give them a fair chance for a few months, and you will get as much above noticing them as an alligator. They can't hurt my feelings, for they lay under the skin; and I never knew but one case of injury resulting from them, and that was to a Yankee: and they take worse to foreigners, any how, than they do to natives. But the way they used that fellow up! first they punched him until he swelled up and busted; then he su-per-a-ted, as the doctor called it, until he was as raw as beef; then he took the ager, owing to the warm weather, and finally he took a steamboat and left the country. He was the only man that ever took mosquitoes to heart that I know of. But mosquitoes is natur, and I never find fault with her. If they ar large, Arkansaw is large, her varmints ar large, her trees ar large, her rivers ar large, and a small mosquito would be of no more use in Arkansaw than preaching in a cane-brake."

This knock-down argument in favour of big mosquitoes used the Hoosier up, and the logician started on a new track, to explain how numerous bear were in his "diggins," where he represented them to be "about as plenty as blackberries, and a little plentifuler."

Upon the utterance of this assertion, a timid little man near me inquired if the bear in Arkansaw ever attacked the settlers in numbers.

"No," said our hero, warming with the subject, "no, stranger, for you see it ain't the natur of bar to go in droves; but the way they squander about in pairs and single ones is edifying. And then the way I hunt them the old black rascals know the crack of my gun as well as they know a pig's squealing. They grow thin in our parts, it frightens them so, and they do take the noise dreadfully, poor things. That gun of mine is perfect *epidemic among bar;* if not watched closely, it will go off as quick on a warm scent as my dog Bowie-knife will: and then that dog—whew! why the fellow thinks that the world is full of bar, he finds them so easy. It's lucky he don't talk as well as think; for with his natural modesty,

if he should suddenly learn how much he is acknowledged to be ahead of all other dogs in the universe, he would be astonished to death in two minutes. Strangers, the dog knows a bar's way as well as a horse-jockey knows a woman's: he always barks at the right time, bites at the exact place, and whips without getting a scratch. I never could tell whether he was made expressly to hunt bar, or whether bar was made expressly for him to hunt: any way, I believe they were ordained to go together as naturally as Squire Jones says a man and woman is, when he moralizes in marrying a couple. In fact, Jones once said, said he, 'Marriage according to law is a civil contract of divine origin; it's common to all countries as well as Arkansaw, and people take to it as naturally as Jim Doggett's Bowie-knife takes to bar.' "

"What season of the year do your hunts take place?" inquired a gentlemanly foreigner, who, from some peculiarities of his baggage, I suspected to be an Englishman, on some hunting expedition, probably at the foot of the Rocky Mountains.

"The season for bar hunting, stranger," said the man of Arkansaw, "is generally all the year round, and the hunts take place about as regular. I read in history that varmints have their fat season, and their lean season. That is not the case in Arkansaw, feeding as they do upon the *spontenacious* productions of the sile, they have one continued fat season the year round: though in winter things in this way is rather more greasy than in summer, I must admit. For that reason bar with us run in warm weather, but in winter, they only waddle. Fat, fat! it's an enemy to speed; it tames everything that has plenty of it. I have seen wild turkeys, from its influence, as gentle as chickens. Run a bar in this fat condition, and the way it improves the critter for eating is amazing; it sort of mixes the ile up with the meat, until you can't tell t'other from which. I've done this often. I recollect one perty morning in particular, of putting an old fellow on the stretch, and considering the weight he carried, he run well. But the dogs soon tired him down, and when I came up with him wasn't he in a beautiful sweat—I might say fever; and then to see his tongue sticking out of his mouth a feet, and his sides sinking and opening like a bellows, and his cheeks so fat he couldn't look cross. In this fix I blazed at him, and pitch me naked into a briar patch if the steam didn't come

out of the bullet-hole ten foot in a straight line. The fellow, I reckon, was made on the high-pressure system, and the lead sort of bust his biler."

"That column of steam was rather curious, or else the bear must have been *warm,*" observed the foreigner, with a laugh.

"Stranger, as you observe, that bar was WARM, and the blowing off of the steam show'd it, and also how hard the varmint had been run. I have no doubt if he had kept on two miles farther his insides would have been stewed; and I expect to meet with a varmint yet of extra bottom, who will run himself into a skinfull of bar's grease: it is possible, much onlikelier things have happened."

"Whereabouts are these bears so abundant?" inquired the foreigner, with increasing interest.

"Why, stranger, they inhabit the neighbourhood of my settlement, one of the prettiest places on old Mississippi—a perfect location, and no mistake; a place that had some defects until the river made the 'cut-off' at 'Shirt-tail bend,' and that remedied the evil, as it brought my cabin on the edge of the river—a great advantage in wet weather, I assure you, as you can now roll a barrel of whiskey into my yard in high water from a boat, as easy as falling off a log. It's a great improvement, as toting it by land in a jug, as I used to do, *evaporated* it too fast, and it became expensive. Just stop with me, stranger, a month or two, or a year if you like, and you will appreciate my place. I can give you plenty to eat; for beside hog and hominy, you can have bar-ham, and bar-sausages, and a mattrass of bar-skins to sleep on, and a wildcat-skin, pulled off hull, stuffed with corn-shucks, for a pillow. That bed would put you to sleep if you had the rheumatics in every joint in your body. I call that ar bed a *quietus.* Then look at my land—the government ain' got another such a piece to dispose of. Such timber, and such bottom land, why you can't preserve any thing natural you plant in it unless you pick it young, things thar will grow out of shape so quick. I once planted in those diggins a few potatoes and beets: they took a fine start, and after that an ox team couldn't have kept them from growing. About that time I went off to old Kentuck on bisiness, and did not hear from them things in three months, when I accidentally stumbled on a fellow who had stopped at my place,

with an idea of buying me out. 'How did you like things?' said I. 'Pretty well,' said he; 'the cabin is convenient, and the timber land is good; but that bottom land ain't worth the first red cent.' 'Why?' said I. ' 'Cause,' said he. ' 'Cause what?' said I. ' 'Cause it's full of cedar stumps and Indian mounds,' said he, *'and it can't be cleared.'* 'Lord,' said I, 'them ar "cedar stumps" is beets, and them ar "Indian mounds" ar tater hills.' As I expected, the crop was overgrown and useless: the sile is too rich, *and planting in Arkansaw is dangerous.* I had a good-sized sow killed in that same bottom land. The old thief stole an ear of corn, and took it down where she slept at night to eat. Well, she left a grain or two on the ground, and lay down on them: before morning the corn shot up, and the percussion killed her dead. I don't plant any more: natur intended Arkansaw for a hunting ground, and I go according to natur."

The questioner who thus elicited the description of our hero's settlement, seemed to be perfectly satisfied, and said no more; but the "Big Bar of Arkansaw" rambled on from one thing to another with a volubility perfectly astonishing, occasionally disputing with those around him, particularly with a "live Sucker" from Illinois, who had the daring to say that our Arkansaw friend's stories "smelt rather tall."

In this manner the evening was spent; but conscious that my own association with so singular a personage would probably end before morning, I asked him if he would not give me a description of some particular bear hunt; adding that I took great interest in such things, though I was no sportsman. The desire seemed to please him, and he squared himself round towards me, saying, that he could give me an idea of a bar hunt that was never beat in this world, or in any other. His manner was so singular, that half of his story consisted in his excellent way of telling it, the great peculiarity of which was, the happy manner he had of emphasizing the prominent parts of his conversation. As near as I can recollect, I have italicized them, and given the story in his own words.

"Stranger," said he, "in bar hunts *I am numerous,* and which particular one, as you say, I shall tell, puzzles me. There was the old she devil I shot at the Hurricane last fall—then there was the old hog thief I popped over at the Bloody Crossing, and then—Yes, I have it! I will give you an idea of a hunt, in which the greatest bar was killed that ever

lived, *none excepted;* about an old fellow that I hunted, more or less, for two or three years; and if that ain't a particular bar hunt, I ain't got one to tell. But in the first place, stranger, let me say, I am pleased with you, because you ain't ashamed to gain information by asking, and listening, and that's what I say to Countess's pups every day when I'm home; and I have got great hopes of them ar pups, because they are continually *nosing* about; and though they stick it sometimes in the wrong place, they gain experience any how, and may learn something useful to boot. Well, as I was saying about this big bar, you see when I and some more first settled in our region, we were drivin to hunting naturally; we soon liked it, and after that we found it an easy matter to make the thing our business. One old chap who had pioneered 'afore us, gave us to understand that we had settled in the right place. He dwelt upon its merits until it was affecting, and showed us, to prove his assertions, more marks on the sassafras trees than I ever saw on a tavern door 'lection time. 'Who keeps that ar reckoning?' said I. 'The bar,' said he. 'What for?' said I. 'Can't tell,' said he; 'but so it is: the bar bite the bark and wood too, at the highest point from the ground they can reach, and you can tell, by the marks,' said he, 'the length of the bar to an inch.' 'Enough,' said I; 'I've learned something here a'ready, and I'll put it in practice.'

"Well, stranger, just one month from that time I killed a bar, and told its exact length before I measured it, by those very marks; and when I did that, I swelled up considerable—I've been a prouder man ever since. So I went on, larning something every day, until I was reckoned a buster, and allowed to be decidedly the best bar hunter in my district; and that is a reputation as much harder to earn than to be reckoned first man in Congress, as an iron ramrod is harder than a toadstool. Did the varmints grow over-cunning by being fooled with by green-horn hunters, and by this means get troublesome, they send for me as a matter of course; and thus I do my own hunting, and most of my neighbours'. I walk into the varmints though, and it has become about as much the same to me as drinking. It is told in two sentences—a bar is started, and he is killed. The thing is somewhat monotonous now—I know just how much they will run, where they will tire, how much they will growl, and what a thundering time I will have in getting them home. I could give you this

history of the chase with all particulars at the commencement, I know the signs so well—*Stranger, I'm certain.* Once I met with a match though, and I will tell you about it; for a common hunt would not be worth relating.

"On a fine fall day, long time ago, I was trailing about for bar, and what should I see but fresh marks on the sassafras trees, about eight inches above any in the forests that I knew of. Says I, 'them marks is a hoax, or it indicates the d——t bar that was ever grown.' In fact, stranger, I couldn't believe it was real, and I went on. Again I saw the same marks, at the same height, and *I knew the thing lived.* That conviction came home to my soul like an earthquake. Says I, 'here is something a-purpose for me: that bar is mine, or I give up the hunting business.' The very next morning what should I see but a number of buzzards hovering over my cornfield. 'The rascal has been there,' said I, 'for that sign is certain:' and, sure enough, on examining, I found the bones of what had been as beautiful a hog the day before, as was ever raised by a Buckeye. Then I tracked the critter out of the field to the woods, and all the marks he left behind, showed me that he was *the bar.*

"Well, stranger, the first fair chase I ever had with that big critter, I saw him no less than three distinct times at a distance: the dogs run him over eighteen miles and broke down, my horse gave out, and I was as nearly used up as a man can be, made on *my* principle, *which is patent.* Before this adventure, such things were unknown to me as possible; but, strange as it was, that bar got me used to it before I was done with him; for he got so at last, that he would leave me on a long chase *quite easy.* How he did it, I never could understand. That a bar runs at all, is puzzling; but how this one could tire down and bust up a pack of hounds and a horse, that were used to overhauling everything they started after in no time, was past my understanding. Well, stranger, that bar finally got so sassy, that he used to help himself to a hog off my premises whenever he wanted one; the buzzards followed after what he left, and so between *bar and buzzard,* I rather think I was *out of pork.*

"Well, missing that bar so often took hold of my vitals, and I wasted away. The thing had been carried too far, and it reduced me in flesh faster than an ager. I would see that bar in every thing I did: *he hunted*

me, and that, too, like a devil, which I began to think he was. While in this fix, I made preparations to give him a last brush, and be done with it. Having completed every thing to my satisfaction, I started at sunrise, and to my great joy, I discovered from the way the dogs run, that they were near him; finding his trail was nothing, for that had become as plain to the pack as a turnpike road. On we went, and coming to an open country, what should I see but the bar very leisurely ascending a hill, and the dogs close at his heels, either a match for him in speed, or else he did not care to get out of their way—I don't know which. But wasn't he a beauty, though? I loved him like a brother.

"On he went, until he came to a tree, the limbs of which formed a crotch about six feet from the ground. Into this crotch he got and seated himself, the dogs yelling all around it; and there he sat eyeing them as quiet as a pond in low water. A green-horn friend of mine, in company, reached shooting distance before me, and blazed away, hitting the critter in the centre of his forehead. The bar shook his head as the ball struck it, and then walked down from that tree as gently as a lady would from a carriage. 'Twas a beautiful sight to see him do that—he was in such a rage that he seemed to be as little afraid of the dogs as if they had been sucking pigs; and the dogs warn't slow in making a ring around him at a respectful distance, I tell you; even Bowie-knife, himself, stood off. Then the way his eyes flashed—why the fire of them would have singed a cat's hair; in fact that bar was in a *wrath all over.* Only one pup came near him, and he was brushed out so totally with the bar's left paw, that he entirely disappeared; and that made the old dogs more cautious still. In the mean time, I came up, and taking deliberate aim as a man should do, at his side, just back of his foreleg, *if my gun did not snap,* call me a coward, and I won't take it personal. Yes, stranger, *it snapped,* and I could not find a cap about my person. While in this predicament, I turned round to my fool friend—says I, 'Bill,' says I, 'you're an ass—you're a fool —you might as well have tried to kill that bar by barking the tree under his belly, as to have done it by hitting him in the head. Your shot has made a tiger of him, and blast me, if a dog gets killed or wounded when they come to blows, I will stick my knife into your liver, I will—' my wrath was up. I had lost my caps, my gun had snapped, the fellow with

me had fired at the bar's head, and I expected every moment to see him close in with the dogs, and kill a dozen of them at least. In this thing I was mistaken, for the bar leaped over the ring formed by the dogs, and giving a fierce growl, was off—the pack, of course, in full cry after him. The run this time was short, for coming to the edge of a lake the varmint jumped in, and swam to a little island in the lake, which it reached just a moment before the dogs. 'I'll have him now,' said I, for I had found my caps in the *lining of my coat*—so, rolling a log into the lake, I paddled myself across to the island, just as the dogs had cornered the bar in a thicket. I rushed up and fired—at the same time the critter leaped over the dogs and came within three feet of me, running like mad; he jumped into the lake, and tried to mount the log I had just deserted, but every time he got half his body on it, it would roll over and send him under; the dogs, too, got around him, and pulled him about, and finally Bowie-knife clenched with him, and they sunk into the lake together. Stranger, about this time, I was excited, and I stripped off my coat, drew my knife, and intended to have taken a part with Bowie-knife myself, when the bar rose to the surface. But the varmint staid under—Bowie-knife came up alone, more dead than alive, and with the pack came ashore. 'Thank God', said I, 'the old villain has got his deserts at last.' Determined to have the body, I cut a grape-vine for a rope, and dove down where I could see the bar in the water, fastened my queer rope to his leg, and fished him, with great difficulty, ashore. Stranger, may I be chawed to death by young alligators, if the thing I looked at wasn't a *she bar, and not the old critter after all*. The way matters got mixed on that island was onaccountably curious, and thinking of it made me more than ever convinced that I was hunting the devil himself. I went home that night and took to my bed—the thing was killing me. The entire team of Arkansaw in bar-hunting, acknowledged himself used up, and the fact sunk into my feelings like a snagged boat will in the Mississippi. I grew as cross as a bar with two cubs and a sore tail. The thing got out 'mong my neighbours, and I was asked how come on that individu-al that never lost a bar when once started? and if that same individ-u-al didn't wear telescopes when he turned a she bar, of ordinary size, into an old he one, a little larger than a horse? 'Perhaps,' said I, 'friends'—getting wrathy—'perhaps you

want to call somebody a liar,' 'Oh, no,' said they, 'we only heard such things as being *rather common* of late, but we don't believe one word of it; oh, no,'—and then they would ride off and laugh like so many hyenas over a dead nigger. It was too much, and I determined to catch that bar, go to Texas, or die,—and I made my preparations accordin'. I had the pack shut up and rested. I took my rifle to pieces and iled it. I put caps in every pocket about my person, *for fear of the lining.* I then told my neighbours, that on Monday morning—naming the day—I would start THAT BAR, and bring him home with me, or they might divide my settlement among them, the owner having disappeared. Well, stranger, on the morning previous to the great day of my hunting expedition, I went into the woods near my house, taking my gun and Bowie-knife along, just *from habit,* and there sitting down also from habit, what should I see, getting over my fence, but *the bar!* Yes, the old varmint was within a hundred yards of me, and the way he walked *over that fence*—stranger, he loomed up like a *black mist,* he seemed so large, and he walked right towards me. I raised myself, took deliberate aim, and fired. Instantly the varmint wheeled, gave a yell, and *walked through the fence* like a falling tree would through a cobweb. I started after, but was tripped up by my inexpressibles, which either from habit, or the excitement of the moment, were about my heels, and before I had really gathered myself up, I heard the old varmint groaning in a thicket near by, like a thousand sinners, and by the time I reached him he was a corpse. Stranger, it took five niggers and myself to put that carcase on a mule's back, and old long-ears waddled under the load, as if he was foundered in every leg of his body, and with a common whopper of a bar, he would have trotted off, and enjoyed himself. 'Twould astonish you to know how big he was: I made a *bed-spread of his skin,* and the way it used to cover my bar mattress, and leave several feet on each side to tuck up, would have delighted you. It was in fact a creation bar, and if it had lived in Samson's time, and had met him, in a fair fight, it would have licked him in the twinkling of a dice-box. But, strangers, I never like the way I hunted, and *missed him.* There is something curious about it, I could never understand,—and I never was satisfied at his giving in so easy at last. Prehaps, he had heard of my preparations to hunt him the next day, so he jist come

in, like Capt. Scott's coon, to save his wind to grunt with in dying; but that ain't likely. My private opinion is, that that bar was an *unhuntable bar, and died when his time come.*"

When the story was ended, our hero sat some minutes with his auditors in a grave silence; I saw there was a mystery to him connected with the bear whose death he had just related, that had evidently made a strong impression on his mind. It was also evident that there was some superstitious awe connected with the affair,—a feeling common with all "children of the wood," when they meet with any thing out of their everyday experience. He was the first one, however, to break the silence, and jumping up, he asked all present to "liquor" before going to bed,—a thing which he did, with a number of companions, evidently to his heart's content.

Long before day, I was put ashore at my place of destination, and I can only follow with the reader, in imagination, our Arkansas friend, in his adventures at the "Forks of Cypress" on the Mississippi.

GOING TO BED
before a
YOUNG LADY

"M."

This sketch was reprinted in the Spirit of the Times, *N. Y., 1845 Feb. 22, and credited to the* Evening Mirror (*N. Y.*), *signed "M." The story refers to Stephen A. Douglas.*

GOING TO BED
before a
YOUNG LADY

"M"

As I was saying, ten years ago, Judge Douglass, of Illinois, was a beardless youth of twenty years of age, freshly come amongst the people of the "Sucker State," with an air about him suspiciously redolent of Yankeeland. A mere youthful adventurer amongst those "square" Suckers—one would deem the position embarrassing. Not so with the judge; he had come on business. A political fortune was to be made, and no time lost. He was about launching on the sea of popular favour, and he commenced a general coast survey the day he arrived. He soon made himself District Attorney, member of the Legislature, Register of the U. S. Land Office, Secretary of State, and Judge of the Supreme Court.

"How do you adapt yourself," said I, "Judge, to the people? How did you 'naturalize' yourself, as it were?"

"Oh, nothing easier; you see I like it. It's democratic. But it did come awkward at first. You know I am, or rather was, bashful to rather a painful degree. Well, now, nine-tenths of my constituents despise luxuries, and have no such thing as a second room in their houses. In beating up votes, I live with my constituents, eat with my constituents, drink with them, lodge with them, pray with them, laugh, hunt, dance and work with

them; I eat their corn dodgers and fried bacon, and sleep two in a bed with them. Among my first acquaintances were the L——s, down under the Bluffs. Fine fellows, the L——s,—by the way, I am sure of five votes there. Well, you perceive, I had to live there: and I did live there. But, sir, I was frightened the first night I slept there. I own it; yes, sir, I acknowledge the corn. An ice in August is something: but I was done to an icicle; had periodical chills for ten days. Did you ever see a Venus in linsey-woolsey?

"No!"

"Then you shall see Serena L——s. They call her the 'White Plover'; seventeen:—plump as a pigeon, and smooth as a persimmon. How the devil, said I to myself, soliloquizing the first night I slept there, am to go to bed before this young lady? I do believe my heart was topsyturvied, for the idea of pulling off my boots before the girl was death. And as to doffing my other fixtures, I would sooner have my leg taken off with a wood-saw. The crisis was tremendous. It was nearly midnight, and the family had been hours in bed. Miss Serena alone remained. Bright as the sun, the merry minx talked on. It was portentously obvious to me at last, that she had determined to outsit me. By repeated spasmodic efforts, my coat, waistcoat, cravat, boots and socks were brought off. During the process, my beautiful neighbor talked to me with unaverted eyes, and with that peculiar kind of placidity employed by painters to imbody their idea of the virgin. I dumped myself down in a chair, in a cold perspiration. A distressing thought occurred to me. Does not the damsel stand on a point of local etiquette? It may be the fashion of these people to see strangers in bed before retiring themselves? May I not have kept those beautiful eyes open, from ignorance of what these people deem good breeding? Neither the lady's eyes nor tongue had indeed betrayed fatigue. Those large jet eyes seemed to dilate and grow brighter as the blaze of the wood fire died away; but doubtless this was from kind consideration for the strange wakefulness of her guest. The thing was clear. I determined to retire, and without delay. I arose with firmness, unloosed my suspenders, and in a voice not altogether steady, said:

" 'Miss Serena, I think I will retire.'

" 'Certainly, sir,' she quietly observed, 'you will lodge there, sir'; in-

clining her beautiful head towards a bed standing a few yards from where she was sitting. I proceeded to uncase; entrenching myself behind a chair the while, fondly imagining the position offered some security. It is simply plain to a man in his senses, that a chair of the fashion of the one I had thrown between myself and 'the enemy,' as a military man would say, offered almost no security at all. No more, in fact, than standing up behind a ladder—nothing in the way of the artillery of bright eyes, as a poet would say, sweeping one down by platoons. Then I had a dead open space of ten feet between me and the bed; a sort of Bridge of Lodi passage which I was forced to make, exposed to a cruel raking fire fore and aft. Although I say it, who should not say it, an emergency never arose for which I had not a resource. I had one for this. The plan was the work of a moment, I de—"

"Ah! I see, you stormed the battery and s—"

"Bah! don't interrupt me. No; I determined, by a bold ruse de guerre, to throw her attention out of the window, clear the perilous passage, and fortify myself under the counterpane before she recovered her surprise. The plan failed. You see I am a small man, physically speaking. Body, limbs, and head, setting up business on one hundred and seven and a half pounds, all told, of flesh, blood, and bones, cannot, individually or collectively, set up any very ostentatious pretensions. I believe the young lady must have been settling in her mind some philosophical point on that head. Perhaps her sense of justice wished to assure itself of a perfectly fair distribution of the respective motives. Perhaps she did not feel easy until she knew that a kind Providence had not added to general poverty individual wrong. Certain it was, she seemed rather pleased with her speculations; for when I arose from a stooping posture finally, wholly disencumbered of cloth, I noticed mischievous shadows playing about the corners of her mouth. It was the moment I had determined to direct her eye to some astonishing circumstance out of the window. But the young lady spoke at the critical moment.

" 'Mr. Douglass,' she observed, 'you have got a mighty small chance of legs there.'

"Men seldom have any notice of their own powers, I never made any pretensions to skill in ground and lofty tumbling; but it is strictly true, I

cleared, at one bound, the open space, planted myself on the centre of the bed, and was buried in the blankets in a twinkling."

"I congratulate you, my boy," said I, poising a cube of the crimson core of the melon on the point of my knife; "a lucky escape truly! But was the young lady modest?"

"Modest, sir!—there is not in Illinois a more modest, or more sensible girl. It's habit—all habit. I think nothing of it now. Why, it's only last week I was at a fine wedding party, and a large and fine assembly of both sexes lodged in the same room, with only three feet or so of neutral territory between them."

"You astonish me, Mr. Douglass."

"'Fact, sir, upon my honour. You see these people are the very soul of hospitality, and never allow a fine social party to turn out at twelve o'clock at night to go long distances home. All that is more cleverly managed here. An Illinois bed has a power of elongation or expansion perfectly enigmatical to strangers. One bed four feet wide, will, on occasion, flank one whole side of the house, and is called a field-bed, and large parties will range themselves on opposite sides of the house as economically as candles in a box."

"But, my dear fellow, this is drouthy prose, introduce yourself to that little fellow in the corner, and pass him over; and now tell me all about old Canandaigua."

HOW SIMON SUGGS "RAISED JACK"

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

From the Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs, Ch. I., reprinted in the Spirit of the Times, *1845 Jan. 11. This and several other Simon Suggs stories appeared originally in Hooper's newspaper* The East Alabamian *and were reprinted in the* Spirit. *Hooper soon after became a regular contributor to the* Spirit.

HOW SIMON SUGGS "RAISED JACK"

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

IT IS NOT often that the living worthy furnishes a theme for the biographer's pen. The pious task of commemorating the acts, and depicting the character of the great or good, is generally and properly deferred until they are past blushing, or swearing—constrained to a decorous behaviour by the folds of their cerements. Were it otherwise, who could estimate the pangs of wounded modesty which would result! Who could say how keen would be the mortification, or how crimson the cheek of Grocer Tibbetts, for instance, should we present him to the world in all the resplendent glory of his public and his private virtues!—dragging him, as it were, from the bosom of retirement and Mrs. Tibbetts, to hold him up before the full gaze of "the community," with all his qualities, characteristics, and peculiarities written on a large label and pasted to his forehead! Wouldn't Mr. Tibbetts almost die of bashfulness? And wouldn't Mrs. Tibbetts tell all her neighbors, that she would just as soon they had put Mr. Tibbetts in the stocks, if it were not for the concomitant little boys and rotten eggs? Certainly: and Mrs. Tabitha Tibbetts in making such a remark, would be impelled by a principle which exists in a majority of human minds—a principle which makes the idea revolting, that every body should know all about us in our life-times, notwithstanding our

characters may present something better even than a fair average of virtue and talent.

But "there is no rule without an exception," and notwithstanding that it is both unusual and improper, generally, to publish biographies of remarkable personages during their lives, for the reason already explained, as well as because such histories must, of necessity, be incomplete and require *post mortem* additions—notwithstanding all this, we say, there are cases and persons, in which and to whom, the general rule cannot be considered to apply. Take, by way of illustration, the case of a candidate for office—for the Presidency we'll say. His life, up to the time when his reluctant acquiescence in the wishes of his friends was wrung from him, by the stern demands of a self-immolating patriotism, MUST be written. It is an absolute, political necessity. His enemies *will* know enough to attack; his friends *must* know enough to defend.—Thus Jackson, Van Buren, Clay, and Polk have each a biography published while they live. Nay, the thing has been carried further; and in the first of each "Life" there is found what is termed a "counterfeit presentment" of the subject of the pages which follow. And so, not only are the moral and intellectual endowments of the candidate heralded to the world of voters; but an attempt is made to create an idea of his *physique*. By this means, all the country has in its mind's eye, an image of a little gentleman with a round, oily face—sleek, bald pate, delicate whiskers, and foxy smile, which they call Martin Van Buren; and future generations of naughty children who will persist in sitting up when they should be a-bed, will be frightened to their cribs by the lithograph of "Major General Andrew Jackson," which their mammas will declare to be a faithful representation of the Evil One —an atrocious slander, by the bye, on the potent, and comparatively well-favoured, prince of the infernal world.

What we have said in the preceding paragraphs was intended to prepare the minds of our readers for the reception of the fact, that we have not undertaken to furnish for their amusement and instruction, in this and the chapters which shall come after, a few incidents—for we are by far too modest to attempt a connected memoir—in the life of CAPTAIN SIMON SUGGS, of TALLAPOOSA, without the profoundest meditation on the propriety of doing so ere the captain has been "gathered to his

fathers." No! no! we have chewed the cud of this matter, until we flatter ourself all its juices have been expressed; and the result is, that as Captain Simon Suggs thinks it "more than probable" he shall "come before the people of Tallapoosa" in the course of a year or two, he is, in our opinion, clearly "within the line of safe precedents," and bound in *honor* to furnish the Suggs party with such information respecting himself, as will enable them to vindicate his character whenever and wherever it may be attacked by the ruthless and polluted tongues of Captain Simon Suggs' enemies. And in order that our hero should not appear before his fellow citizens under circumstances less advantageous than those which mark the introduction to the public of other distinguished individuals, we have, at the outlay of much trouble and expense, obtained the services of an artist competent to delineate his countenance,[1] so that all who have never yet seen the Captain may be able to recognize him immediately whenever it shall be their good fortune to be inducted into his presence. His autograph,—which was only produced unblotted and in orthographical correctness, after three several efforts, "from a rest," on the counter of Bill Griffin's confectionary—we have presented with a view to humor the whim of those who fancy they can read character in a signature. All such, we suspect, would pronounce the Captain *rugged, stubborn, and austere* in his disposition; whereas in fact, he is *smooth, even-tempered, and facile!*

In aid of the portrait, however, it is necessary we should add a verbal description, in order to perfect the reader's conceptions of the Captain.

Beginning then, at our friend Simon's intellectual extremity:—His head is somewhat large, and thinly covered with coarse, silver-white hair, a single lock of which lies close and smooth down the middle of a forehead which is thus divided in a couple of very acute triangles, the base of each of which is an eye-brow, lightly defined, and seeming to owe its scantiness to the depilatory assistance of a pair of tweezers. Beneath these almost shrubless cliffs, a pair of eyes with light-grey pupils and variegated whites, dance and twinkle in an aqueous humor which is constantly distilling from the corners. Lids without lashes complete the optical apparatus of Captain Suggs; and the edges of these, always of a sanguineous hue,

[1] See the Frontispiece. Original drawing by F. O. C. Darley, the outstanding illustrator of early American humor.

glow with a reduplicated brilliancy whenever the Captain has remained a week or so in town, or elsewhere in the immediate vicinity of any of those citizens whom the county court has vested with the important privilege of vending "spirituous liquors in less qualities than one quart." The nose we find in the neighborhood of these eyes, is long and low, with an extremity of singular acuteness, overhanging the subjacent mouth. Across the middle, which is slightly raised, the skin is drawn with exceeding tightness, as if to contrast with the loose and wrinkled abundance supplied to the throat and chin. But the mouth of Captain Simon Suggs is his great feature, and measures about four inches horizontally. An ever-present sneer—not all malice, however—draws down the corners, from which radiate many small wrinkles that always testify to the Captain's love of the "filthy weed." A sharp chin monopolizes our friends' bristly, iron-gray beard. All these facial beauties are supported by a long and skinny, but muscular neck, which is inserted after the ordinary fashion in the upper part of a frame, lithe, long, and sinewy, and clad in Kentucky jeanes, a trifle worn. Add to all this, that our friend is about fifty years old, and seems to indurate as he advances in years, and our readers will have as accurate an idea of the personal appearance of Captain Simon Suggs, late of the Tallapoosa Volunteers, as we are able to give them.

The moral and intellectual qualities which, with the physical proportions we have endeavoured to portray, make up the entire entity of Captain Suggs, may be readily described. His whole ethical system lies snugly in his favourite aphorism—"IT IS GOOD TO BE SHIFTY IN A NEW COUNTRY" —which means that it is right and proper that one should live as merrily and as comfortably as possible at the expense of others; and of the practicability of this in particular instances, the Captain's whole life has been a long series of the most convincing illustrations. But notwithstanding this fundamental principle of Captain Suggs' philosophy, it were uncandid not to say that his actions often indicate the most benevolent emotions; and there are well-authenticated instances within our knowledge, wherein he has divided with a needy friend, the five or ten dollar bill which his consummate address had enabled him to obtain from some luckless individual without the rendition of any sort of equivalent, excepting only solemnly reiterated promises to repay within two hours at farthest. To this amiable

trait, and his riotous goodfellowship, the Captain is indebted for his great popularity among a certain class of his fellow citizens—that is, the class composed of the individuals with whom he divides the bank bills, and holds his wild nocturnal revelries.

The shifty Captain Suggs is a miracle of shrewdness. He possesses, in an eminent degree, that tact which enables man to detect the *soft spots* in his fellow, and to assimilate himself to whatever company he may fall in with. Besides, he has a quick, ready wit, which has extricated him from many an unpleasant predicament, and which makes him whenever he chooses to be so—and that is always—very companionable. In short, nature gave the Captain the precise intellectual outfit most to be desired by a man of his propensities. She sent him into the world a sort of he-Pallas, ready to cope with his kind, from his infancy, in all the arts by which men *"get along"* in the world; if she made him, in respect to his moral conformation, a beast of prey, she did not refine the cruelty by denying him the fangs and the claws.

But it is high time we were beginning to record some of those specimens of the worthy Captain's ingenuity, which entitle him to the epithet "Shifty." We shall therefore relate the earliest characteristic anecdote which we have been able to obtain; and we present it to our readers with assurances that it has come to our knowledge in such a way as to leave upon our mind not "a shadow of doubt" of its perfect genuineness. It will serve, if no other purpose, at least to illustrate the precocious development of Captain Suggs' peculiar talent.

Until Simon entered his seventeenth year, he lived with his father, an old "hard shell" Baptist preacher; who, though very pious and remarkably austere, was very avaricious. The old man reared his boys—or endeavoured to do so—according to the strictest requisitions of the moral law. But he lived, at the time to which we refer, in Middle Georgia, which was then newly settled; and Simon, whose wits from the time he was a "shirt-tail boy," were always too sharp for his father's, contrived to contract all the coarse vices incident to such a region. He stole his mother's roosters to fight them at Bob Smith's grocery, and his father's plough-horses to enter them in "quarter" matches at the same place. He pitched dollars with Bob Smith himself, and could "beat him into doll rags"

whenever it came to a measure. To crown his accomplishments, Simon was tip-top at the game of "old sledge," which was the fashionable game of that era; and was early initiated in the mysteries of "stocking the papers." The vicious habits of Simon were, of course, a sore trouble to his father, Elder Jedediah. He reasoned, he counselled, he remonstrated, and he lashed—but Simon was an incorrigible, irreclaimable devil. One day the simple-minded old man returned rather unexpectedly to the field where he had left Simon and Ben and a negro boy named Bill, at work. Ben was still following his plough, but Simon and Bill were in a fence corner very earnestly engaged at "seven up." Of course the game was instantly suspended, as soon as they spied the old man sixty or seventy yards off, striding towards them.

It was evidently a "gone case" with Simon and Bill; but our hero determined to make the best of it. Putting the cards into one pocket, he coolly picked up the small coins which constituted the stake, and fobbed them in the other, remarking, "Well, Bill, this game's blocked; we'd as well quit."

"But, mass Simon," remarked the boy, "half dat money's mine. Ain't you gwine to lemme hab 'em?"

"Oh, never mind the money, Bill; the old man's going to take the bark off both of us—and besides, with the hand I helt when we quit, I should 'a beat you and won it all any way."

"Well, but mass Simon, we nebber finish de game, and de rule—"

"Go to an orful h—l with your rule," said the impatient Simon—"don't you see daddy's right down upon us, with an armful of hickories? I tell you I helt nothin' but trumps, and could 'a beat the horns off a billy-goat. Don't that satisfy you? Somehow or another you're d—d hard to please!" About this time a thought struck Simon, and in a low tone—for by this time the Reverend Jedediah was close at hand—he continued, "But maybe daddy don't know, *right down sure,* what we've been doing. Let's try him with a lie—twon't hurt, no way—let's tell him we've been playing mumble-peg."

Bill was perforce compelled to submit to this inequitable adjustment of his claim to a share of the stakes; and of course agreed to swear to a game of mumble-peg. All this was settled and a peg driven into the ground,

slyly and hurriedly, between Simon's legs as he sat on the ground, just as the old man reached the spot. He carried under his left arm, several neatly-trimmed sprouts of formidable length, while in his left hand he held one which he was intently engaged in divesting of its superfluous twigs.

"Soho! youngsters!—*you* in the fence corner, and the *crap* in the grass; what saith the Scriptur', Simon? 'Go to the ant, thou sluggard,' and so forth and so on. What in the round creation of the yeath have you and that nigger been a-doin'?"

Bill shook with fear, but Simon was cool as a cucumber, and answered his father to the effect that they had been wasting a little time in the game of mumble-peg.

"Mumble-peg! mumble-peg!" repeated old Mr. Suggs, "what's that?"

Simon explained the process of *rooting* for the peg; how the operator got upon his knees, keeping his arms stiff by his sides, leaned forward and extracted the peg with his teeth.

"So you git *upon your knees,* do you, to pull up that nasty little stick! you'd better git upon 'em to ask mercy for your sinful souls and for a dyin' world. But let's see one o' you git the peg up now."

The first impulse of our hero was to volunteer to gratify the curiosity of his worthy sire, but a glance at the old man's countenance changed his "notion," and he remarked that "Bill was a long ways the best hand," Bill who did not deem Simon's modesty an omen very favourable to himself, was inclined to reciprocate compliments with his young master; but a gesture of impatience from the old man set him instantly upon his knees; and, bending forward, he essayed to lay hold with his teeth of the peg, which Simon, just at that moment, very wickedly pushed a half inch further down. Just as the breeches and hide of the boy were stretched to the uttermost, old Mr. Suggs brought down his longest hickory, with both hands, upon the precise spot where the tension was greatest. With a loud yell, Bill plunged forward, upsetting Simon, and rolled in the grass; rubbing the castigated part with fearful energy. Simon, though overthrown, was unhurt; and he was mentally complimenting himself upon the sagacity which had prevented his illustrating the game of mumble-peg for the paternal amusement, when his attention was arrested by the

old man's stooping to pick up something—what is it?—a card upon which Simon had been sitting, and which, therefore, had not gone with the rest of the pack into his pocket. The simple Mr. Suggs had only a vague idea of the paste-board abomination called *cards;* and though he decidedly inclined to the opinion that this was one, he was by no means certain of the fact. Had Simon known this he would certainly have escaped; but he did not. His father assuming the look of extreme sapiency which is always worn by the interrogator who does desire or expect to increase his knowledge by his questions, asked—

"What's this, Simon?"

"The Jack-a-dimunts," promptly responded Simon, who gave up all as lost after this *faux pas.*

"What was it doin' down thar Simon, my sonny?" continued Mr. Suggs, in an ironically affectionate tone of voice.

"I had it under my leg, thar, to make it on Bill, the first time it come trumps," was the ready reply.

"What's trumps?" asked Mr. Suggs, with a view of arriving at the import of the word.

"Nothin' a'n't trumps *now,*" said Simon, who misapprehended his father's meaning—"but *clubs* was, when you come along and busted up the game."

A part of this answer was Greek to the Reverend Mr. Suggs, but a portion of it was full of meaning. They had then, most unquestionably, been "throwing" cards, the scoundrels! the "oudacious" little hellions!

"To the 'mulberry' with both on ye, in a hurry," said the old man sternly. But the lads were not disposed to be in a "hurry," for "the mulberry" was the scene of all formal punishment administered during work hours in the field. Simon followed his father, however, but made, as he went along, all manner of "faces" at the old man's back; gesticulated as if he were going to strike him between the shoulders with his fists, and kicking at him so as to almost touch his coat tail with his shoe. In this style they walked on to the mulberry tree, in whose shade Simon's brother Ben was resting.

COUSIN Sally DILLIARD

HAMILTON C. JONES

The date of the first appearance and the original source of this story are not known, except that it was contributed somewhere in the thirties to a North Carolina newspaper (Watterson). The story was reprinted in the Spirit of the Times, *1844 May 18, with this introductory remark by Wm. T. Porter, "We think it high time that Cousin Sally Dilliard, Captain Rice, and Mose were again brought to the memory of the public; they deserve to be brought before the people every few years. Especially will they keep our friends in good humor with themselves for at least a week after reading."*

"Cousin Sally Dilliard" was one of the earliest and most widely-read of all the humorous stories. It went the rounds of the American press time and time again.

COUSIN Sally DILLIARD

HAMILTON C. JONES

Scene: A court of justice in North Carolina.

A BEARDLESS disciple of Themis rises, and thus addresses the Court: "May it please your Worships, and you, Gentlemen of the Jury, since it has been my fortune (good or bad, I will not say) to exercise myself in legal disquisitions, it has never befallen me to be obliged to prosecute so direful, marked, and malicious an assault—a more willful, violent, dangerous battery—and finally, a more diabolical breach of the peace, has seldom happened in a civilized country; and I dare say it has seldom been your duty to pass upon one so shocking to benevolent feelings, as this which took place over at Captain Rice's, in this county. But you will hear from the witnesses."

The witnesses being sworn, two or three were examined and deposed. One said that he heard the noise, and did not see the fight; another that he seen the row, but didn't know who struck first; and a third, that he was very drunk, and couldn't say much about the skrimmage.

Lawyer Chops. I am sorry, gentlemen, to have occupied your time with the stupidity of the witnesses examined. It arises, gentlemen, altogether from misapprehension on my part. Had I known, as I now do, that I had

a witness in attendance who was well acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, and who was able to make himself clearly understood by the court and jury, I should not so long have trespassed upon your time and patience. Come forward, Mr. Harris, and be sworn.

So forward comes the witness, a fat, shuffy old man, a "leetle" corned, and took his oath with an air.

Chops. Harris, we wish you to tell all about the riot that happened the other day at Captain Rice's; and as a good deal of time has already been wasted in circumlocution, we wish you to be compendious, and at the same time as explicit, as possible.

Harris. Adzactly (giving the lawyer a knowing wink, and at the same time clearing his throat). Captain Rice, he gin a treat, and cousin Sally Dilliard, she came over to our house and axed me if my wife she mout n't go? I told cousin Sally Dilliard that my wife was poorly, being as how she had a touch of the rheumatics in the hip, and the big swamp was in the road and the big swamp was up, for there had been a heap of rain lately; but howsomever, as it was she, cousin Sally Dilliard, my wife she mout go. Well, cousin Sally Dilliard then axed me if Mose he mout n't go? I told cousin Sally Dilliard that he was the foreman of the crap, and the crap was smartly in the grass; but howsomever as it was she, cousin Sally Dilliard, Mose he mout go—

Chops. In the name of common sense, Mr. Harris, what do you mean by this rigmarole?

Witness. Captain Rice, he gin a treat, and cousin Sally Dilliard she came over to our house and axed me if my wife she mout n't go? I told cousin Sally Dilliard—

Chops. Stop, sir, if you please; we don't want to hear anything about your cousin Sally Dilliard and your wife. Tell us about the fight at Rice's.

Witness. Well, I will, sir, if you will let me.

Chops. Well, sir, go on.

Witness. Well, sir, Captain Rice he gin a treat, and cousin Sally Dilliard she came over to our house and axed me if my wife she mout n't go—

Chops. There it is again. Witness, please to stop.

Witness. Well, sir, what do you want?

Chops. We want to know about the fight, and you must not proceed in

this impertinent story. Do you know anything about the matter before the court?

Witness. To be sure I do.

Chops. Well, go on and tell it, and nothing else.

Witness. Well, Captain Rice, he gin a treat,—

Chops. This is intolerable. May it please the Court, I move that this witness be committed for a contempt; he seems to be trifling with this court.

Court. Witness, you are now before a court of justice, and unless you behave yourself in a more becoming manner, you will be sent to jail; so begin and tell what you know about the fight at Captain Rice's.

Witness. (Alarmed.) Well, gentlemen, Captain Rice, he gin a treat, and cousin Sally Dilliard—

Chops. I hope the witness may be ordered into custody.

Court (after deliberating). Mr. Attorney, the Court is of the opinion that we may save time by telling witness to go on in his own way. Proceed, Mr. Harris, with your story, but stick to the point.

Witness. Yes, gentlemen. Well, Captain Rice, he gin a treat, and cousin Sally Dilliard she came over to our house and asked me if my wife she mout go? I told cousin Sally Dilliard that my wife she was poorly, being as how she had the rheumatics in the hip, and the big swamp was up; but howsomever, as it was she, cousin Sally Dilliard, my wife she mout go. Well, cousin Sally Dilliard then axed me if Mose he mout n't go. I told cousin Sally Dilliard as how Mose—he was foreman of the crap, and the crap was smartly in the grass—but howsomever, as it was she, cousin Sally Dilliard, Mose he mout go. So they goes on together, Mose, my wife, and cousin Sally Dilliard, and they come to the big swamp, and it was up, as I was telling you; but being as how there was a log across the big swamp, cousin Sally Dilliard and Mose, like genteel folks, they walked the log; but my wife, like a darned fool, hoisted her coats and waded through. And that's all I know about the fight.

A Useful COON-SKIN

DAVID CROCKETT

From Watterson's Oddities in Southern Life and Character *p. 246.*

A Useful COON-SKIN

DAVID CROCKETT

WHILE ON the subject of election matters, I will relate a little anecdote about myself, which will show the people to the East how we manage these things on the frontiers. It was when I first run for Congress; I was then in favor of the Hero, (Andrew Jackson), for he had chalked out his course so sleek in his letter to the Tennessee legislature that, like Sam Patch, says I, "There can be no mistake in him," and so I went ahead. No one dreamt about the monster and the deposits at that time, and so, as I afterward found, many like myself were taken in by these fair promises, which were worth about as much as a flash in the pan when you have a fair shot at a fat bear.

But I am losing sight of my story. Well, I started off to the Cross Roads dressed in my hunting shirt, and my rifle on my shoulder. Many of our constituents had assembled there to get a taste of the quality of the candidates at orating. Job Snelling, a gander-shanked Yankee, who had been caught somewhere about Plymouth Bay, and been shipped to the West with a cargo of codfish and rum, erected a large shantee, and set up shop for the occasion. A large posse of the voters had assembled before I arrived, and my opponent had already made considerable headway with

his speechifying and his treating, when they spied me about a rifle shot from camp, sauntering along as if I was not a party in business. "There comes Crockett," cried one. "Let us hear the colonel," cried another; and so I mounted the stump that had been cut down for the occasion, and began to bushwhack in the most approved style.

I had not been up long before there was such an uproar in the crowd that I could not hear my own voice, and some of my constituents let me know that they could not listen to me on such a dry subject as the welfare of the nation until they had something to drink, and that I must treat them. Accordingly I jumped down from the rostrum, and led the way to the shantee, followed by my constituents, shouting, "Huzza for Crockett!" and "Crockett forever!"

When we entered the shantee Job was busy dealing out his rum in a style that showed he was making a good day's work of it, and I called for a quart of the best; but the crooked crittur returned no other answer than by pointing to a board over the bar, on which he had chalked in large letters, *"Pay to-day and trust to-morrow."* Now that idea brought me up all standing; it was a sort of cornering in which there was no back-out, for ready money in the West, in those times, was the shyest thing in all natur, and it was most particularly shy with me on that occasion.

The voters, seeing my predicament, fell off to the other side, and I was left deserted and alone, as the Government will be, when he no longer has any offices to bestow. I saw as plain as day that the tide of popular opinion was against me, and that unless I got some rum speedily I should lose my election as sure as there are snakes in Virginny; and it must be done soon, or even burnt brandy wouldn't save me. So I walked away from the shantee, but in another manner from the way I entered it, for on this occasion I had no train after me, and not a voice shouted, "Huzza for Crockett!" Popularity sometimes depends on a very small matter indeed; in this particular it was worth a quart of New England rum, and no more.

Well, knowing that a crisis was at hand, I struck into the woods, with my rifle on my shoulder, my best friend in time of need; and, as good fortune would have it, I had not been out more than a quarter of an hour before I treed a fat coon, and in the pulling of a trigger he lay dead at the foot of the tree. I soon whipped his hairy jacket off his back, and again

bent my steps towards the shantee, and walked up to the bar, but not alone, for this time I had half a dozen of my constituents at my heels. I threw down the coon-skin upon the counter, and called for a quart, and Job, though busy dealing out rum, forgot to point at his chalked rules and regulations; for he knew that a coon was as good a legal tender for a quart in the West as a New York shilling any day in the year.

My constituents now flocked about me, and cried, "Huzza for Crockett!" "Crockett forever!" and finding the tide had taken a turn, I told them several yarns to get them in a good humor; and having soon dispatched the value of the coon, I went out and mounted the stump without opposition, and a clear majority of the voters followed me to hear what I had to offer for the good of the nation. Before I was half through one of my constituents moved that they would hear the balance of my speech after they had washed down the first part with some more of Job Snelling's extract of cornstalk and molasses, and the question being put, it was carried unanimously. It wasn't considered necessary to tell the yeas and nays, so we adjourned to the shantee, and on the way I began to reckon that the fate of the nation pretty much depended upon my shooting another coon.

While standing at the bar, feeling sort of bashful while Job's rules and regulations stared me in the face, I cast down my eyes, and discovered one end of the coon-skin sticking between the logs that supported the bar. Job had slung it there in the hurry of business. I gave it a sort of quick jerk, and it followed my hand as natural as if I had been the rightful owner. I slapped it on the counter, and Job, little dreaming that he was barking up the wrong tree, shoved along another bottle, which my constituents quickly disposed of with great good humor, for some of them saw the trick; and then we withdrew to the rostrum to discuss the affairs of the nation.

I don't know how it was, but the voters soon became dry again, and nothing would do but we must adjourn to the shantee; and as luck would have it, the coon-skin was still sticking between the logs, as if Job had flung it there on purpose to tempt me. I was not slow in raising it to the counter, the rum followed, of course, and I wish I may be shot if I didn't, before the day was over, get ten quarts for the same identical skin, and

from a fellow, too, who in those parts was considered as sharp as a steel trap and as bright as a pewter button.

This joke secured me my election, for it soon circulated like smoke among my constituents, and they allowed, with one accord, that the man who could get the whip hand of Job Snelling in fair trade, could outwit Old Nick himself, and was the real grit for them in Congress. Job was by no means popular; he boasted of always being wide awake, and that any one who could take him in was free to do so, for he came from a stock that, sleeping or waking, had always one eye open, and the other not more than half closed. The whole family were geniuses. His father was the inventor of wooden nutmegs, by which Job said he might have made a fortune, if he had only taken out a patent and kept the business in his own hands; his mother, Patience, manufactured the first white oak pumpkin seeds of the mammoth kind, and turned a pretty penny the first season; and his aunt Prudence was the first to discover that corn husks, steeped into tobacco water, would make as handsome Spanish wrappers as ever came from Havana, and that oak leaves would answer all the purpose of filling, for no one could discover the difference except the man who smoked them, and then it would be too late to make a stir about it. Job himself bragged of having made some useful discoveries, the most profitable of which was the art of converting mahogany sawdust into cayenne pepper, which he said was a profitable and safe business; for the people have been so long accustomed to having dust thrown in their eyes that there wasn't much danger of being found out.

The way I got to the blind side of the Yankee merchant was pretty generally known before election day, and the result was that my opponent might as well have whistled jigs to a milestone as attempt to beat up for votes in that district. I beat him out and out, quite back into the old year, and there was scarce enough left of him, after the canvass was over, to make a small grease spot. He disappeared without even leaving a mark behind; and such will be the fate of Adam Huntsman, if there is a fair fight and no gouging.

After the election was over, I sent Snelling the price of the rum, but took good care to keep the fact from the knowledge of my constituents. Job refused the money, and sent me word that it did him good to be taken

in occasionally, as it served to brighten his ideas; but I afterwards learnt when he found out the trick that had been played upon him, he put all the rum I had ordered in his bill against my opponent, who, being elated with the speeches he had made on the affairs of the nation, could not descend to examine into the particulars of a bill of a vender of rum in the small way.

THE KNOB DANCE—
A TENNESSEE FROLIC

GEORGE W. HARRIS

From the Spirit of the Times, *N. Y., 1845 Aug. 2, Vol. XV, page 267. This was Harris's first full-length humorous sketch contributed to the* Spirit *over the pseudonym "Sugartail." The sketch was also reprinted under the title,* Dick Harlan's Tennessee Frolic *in Wm. T. Porter's collection,* Quarter Race in Kentucky, *1846.*

THE KNOB DANCE— A TENNESSEE FROLIC

GEORGE W. HARRIS

Knoxville, July 16, 1845

YOU MAY talk of your bar hunts, Mister Porter, and your deer hunts, and knottin tigers' tails through the bung-holes of barrels, an cock fitin, and all that but if a regular bilt frolick in the Nobs of "Old Knox," don't beat 'em all blind for fun, then I'm no judge of fun, that's all! I said *fun,* and I say it agin, from a *kiss* that cracks like a wagin-whip up to a *fite* that rouses up all out-doors—and as to laffin, why they *invented* laffin, and the *last* laff will be hearn at a Nob dance about three in the morning! I'm jest gettin so I can ride arter the motions I made at one at Jo Spraggins's a few days ago.

I'll try and tell you who Jo Spraggins is. He's a squire, a school comishner, overlooker of a mile of Nob road *that leads towards Roody's still-house*—a fiddler, a judge of a hoss, and a hoss himself! He can belt six shillins worth of corn-juice at still-house rates and travel—can out shute and out lie any feller from the Smoky Mounting to Noxville, and, if they'll bar one feller in Nox, I'll say to the old Kaintuck Line! (I'm sorter feared of him for they say that he lied a jassack to death in two hours!)—can make more spinin-wheels, kiss more spinners, thrash more wheat an more

men than any one-eyed man I know on. He hates a circuit rider, a nigger, and a shot gun—loves a woman, old sledge, and sin in eny shape. He lives in a log hous about ten yards squar; it has two rooms one at the bottom an one at the top of the ladder—has all out ove doors fur a yard, and all the South fur its ocupants at times. He gives a frolick onst in three weeks in plowin time and one every Saturday-nite the ballance of the year, and only axes a "fip" for a reel, and two "bits" fur what corn-juice you suck; he throws the galls in, and a bed too in the hay, if you git too hot to locomote. The supper is made up by the fellers; every one fetches sumthin; sum a lick of meal, sum a middlin of bacon, sum a hen, sum a possum, sum a punkin, sum a grab of taters, or a pocket full of peas, or dried apples, an sum only fetches a good appetite and a skin chock full of perticular deviltry, and if thars been a shutin match for beef the day before, why a *leg* finds its way to Jo's, sure, without eny help from the ballance of the critter. He gives Jim Smith, (the store-keeper over Bay's Mounting,) *warnin* to fetch a skane of silk fur fiddle-strings, and sum "Orleans" for sweetnin, or not to fetch himself; the silk and sugar has never failed to be thar yet. Jo then mounts Punkinslinger bar backed, about three hours afore sun down and gives all the galls *item*. He does this a leetle of the slickest—jist rides past in a peart rack, singin,

> "Oh, I met a frog, with a fiddle on his back,
> A axin his way to the fro-l-i-c-k!
> Wha-a he! wha he! wha he! wha he! he-ke-he!"

That's enuf! The galls nows *that* aint a jackass, so by sun-down they come pourin out of the woods like pissants out of an old log when tother end's afire, jest "as fine as silk" and full of fun, fixed out in all sorts of fancy doins, from the broad-striped homespun to the sunflower callico, with the thunder-and-lightnin ground. As for silk, if one had a silk gown she's be too smart to wear it to Jo Spraggins's, fur if she did she'd go home in hir petticote-tale *sartin*, for the homespun wud tare it off of hir quicker nor winkin, and if the sunflowers dident help the homespuns, they woudn't do the silk eny good, so you see that silk is never ratlin about your ears at a Nob dance.

The sun had about sot afore I got the things fed an had Barkmill saddled (you'll larn directly why I call my poney Barkmill), but an owl couldent have cotch a rat afore I was in site of Jo's with my gall, Jule Sawyers, up behind me. She hugged me mity tite she was *"so feerd of fallin off that drated poney."* She said she didn't mind a fall but it mought break hir leg an then good bye frolicks—she'd be fit fur nuthin but to nuss brats ollers arterwards. I now hearn the fiddle ting-tong-ding-domb. The yard was full of fellers and two tall fine lookin galls was standin in the door, face to face holdin up the door posts with their backs, laffin, an castin sly looks into the house, an now an then kickin each other with their knees, an then the one kicked wud bow so perlite, and quick at that, and then they'd laff agin an turn red. Jo was a standin in the hous helpin the galls to hold the facins up, an when they'd kick each other he'd wink at the fellers in the yard an grin. Jule, she bounced off just like a bag of wool-rolls, and I hitched my bark-machine up to a saplin that warnt skinned, so he'd git a craw-full of good fresh bark afore mornin. I giv Jule a kiss to sorter molify my natur an put hir in heart like, and in we walked. "Hey! hurray!" said the boys, "my gracious!" said the galls, "if here aint Dick an Jule!" jist like we hadent been *rite thar* only last Saturday nite. "Well, I know we'll have reel now!" "Hurraw!—Go it while you're young!" "Hurraw for the brimstone kiln—every man praise his country!" "Clar the ring!" "Misses Spraggins drive out these dratted tow-headed brats of your'n—give room!" "Who-oo-whoop! whar's that crock of baldface, and that gourd of honey? Jim Smith, hand over that spoon, an quit a lickin it like "sank in a bean-pot." "You, Jake Snyder, don't holler so!" says the old oman—"why you are worse nor a painter." "Holler! why I was jist *whispering* to that gall on the bed—*who-a-whoopee!* now I'm beginning to *holler!* Did you hear *thát,* Misses Spraggins, and be darned to your bar legs? You'd make a nice hemp-brake, you would." "Come here, Suse Thompson, and let me pin your dress behind? Your back looks adzactly like a blaze on a white oak!" "My *back* aint nuffin to you, Mister Smarty!" "Bill Jones, quit a smashin that ar cat's tail!" "Well, let hir keep hir tail clar of my ant killers!" "Het Goins, stop tumblin that bed an tie your *sock!"* "Thankee marm, its a longer stockin than you've got—look at it!" "Jim Clark has gone to the woods for fat pine,

and Peggy Willet is along to take a lite for him—they've been gone a coon's age. Oh, here comes the lost 'babes in the wood,' and no *lite!*" "Whar's that lite! whar's that torch! I say, Peggy, whar *is* that bundle of lite wood?" "Why, I fell over a log and lost it, and we hunted clar to the foot of the holler for it, and never found it. It's no account, no how—nuthin but a little pine—who cares?" "Hello, thar, gin us 'Forked Deer,' old fiddle-teazer, or I'll give you forked litnin! *Ar* you a goin to tum-tum all nite on that pot-gutted old pine box of a fiddle, *say?*" "Give him a sock at the crock and a lick at the patent bee-hive—it'll *ile* his elbows." "Misses Spraggins you're a hoss! cook on, don't mind me—I dident aim to slap *you;* it was Suze Winters I *wanted* to hit; but you stooped so fair—" "Yes, and it's well for your good looks that you didn't hit to hurt me, old feller!" "Turn over them rashers of bacon, they're a burnin!" "Mind your own business, Bob Proffit, I've cooked for frolicks afore you shed your petticotes—so jist hush an talk to Marth Giffin! See! she is beckonin to you!" "That's a lie, marm! If he comes a near me I'll unjint his dratted neck! No sech fool that when a gall puts hir arm round his neck will break and run, shall look at *me,* that's flat! Go an try Bet Holden!" "Thankee, marm, I don't take your leavins," says Bet, hir face lookin like a full cross between a gridiron and a steel-trap.

Whoop! hurraw! Gether your galls for a break down! Give us "Forked Deer!" "No, give us 'Natchez-under-the-hill!' " "Oh, Shucks! give us 'Rocky Mounting,' or 'Misses McCloud!' " " 'Misses McCloud' be darned, and 'Rocky Mounting' too! jist give us

"She woudent, and she coudent, and she dident come at all!"

"Thar! that's it! Now make a brake! *Tang!* Thar is a brake—a string's gone!" "Thar'll be a head broke afore long!" "Giv him goss—no giv him a horn and every time he stops repeat the dose, and nar another string'll brake to nite. Tink-tong! Ting-tong! all rite! Now go it!" and if I know what *goin it* is, we *did* go it.

About midnite, Misses Spraggins sung out "stop that ar dancin and come and get your supper!" It was sot in the yard on a table made of forks stuck in the ground and plank of the stable loft, with sheets for table cloths. We had danced, kissed and drank ourselves into a perfect thrashin-machine apetite, and the vittals *hid* themselves in a way quite

alarmin to tavern-keepers. Jo sung out "nives is scase, so give what thar is to the galls and let the ballance use thar paws—they was invented afore nives, eney how. Now, Gents, jist walk into the fat of this land. I'm sorter feerd the honey wont last till day break, but the liquor will, I *think,* so you men when you drink your'n, run an kiss the galls fur sweetnin—let them have the honey—it belongs to them, naturaly!"—"Hurraw, my Jo! You know how to do things rite." "Well, I rayther think I do; I never was rong but onst in my life and then I mistook a camp meetin for a political speechifyin, so I rid up an axed the speaker 'how much Tarrif there was on rot-gut?' and he said 'about here there *appeared* to be none!' That rayther sot me, as I was right smartly smoked, myself, jist at that time. I had enough liquor plumb in me to swim a skunk, so I come agin at him. I axed him 'who was the bigest fool the Bible told of?' an he said 'Noah for he'd get tite!' I *thought,* mind, I only thought he might be a pokin his dead cat at somebody what lives in this holler; I felt my bristles a raisin my jacket-back up like a tent cloth, so I axed him if he'd '*ever seed the Elephant?*' He said no, but he had seen *a grocery walk,* and he expected to see one *rot down* from its *totterin* looks, purty soon!' Thinks I, Jo you're beat at your own game; I sorter felt mean, so I spurr'd and sot old Punkinslinger to cavortin like he was skeered, and I wheeled and twisted out of *that* crowd, an when I *did* git out of site the way I did sail was a caution to turkles and all the other slow varmints."

Well, we danced, and hurrawed without eny thing of *very* particular interest to happen, till about three o'clock, when the darndest muss was kicked up you ever did see. Jim Smith sot down on the bed alongside of Bet Holden (the steel-trap gall), and jist fell to huggin of hir bar fashion. She tuck it very kind till she seed Sam Henry a looking on from behind about a dozen galls, *then* she fell to kickin *an* a hollerin, *an* a screechin like all rath. Sam he come up an told Jim to let Bet go! Jim told him to go to a far off countrie whar they give away brimestone and throw in the fire to burn it. Sam hit him strate atween the eyes an after a few licks the fitin *started.* Oh hush! It makes my mouth water now to think what a beautiful row we had. One feller from Cady's Grove, nocked a hole in the bottom of a fryin-pan over Dan Turner's head, and left it a hangin round his neck, the handle flyin about like a long que, and thar it hung till Jabe

Thurman cut it off with a cold chissel next day! That was *his share*, fur that nite, sure. Another feller got nocked into a meal-barrel; he was as mealy as an Irish tater, and as *hot* as hoss-radish; when he bursted the hoops and cum out he rared a few. Two fellers fit out of the door, down the hill, and into the creek, and thar ended it, in a quiet way, all alone. A perfect mule from Stock Creek hit *me* a wipe with a pair of windin blades; he made kindlin-wood of them, an I lit on him. We had it head-and-tails fur a very long time, all over the house, but the truth must come and shame my kin, he warped me *nice,* so, jist to save his time I *hollered!* The lickin he give me made me sorter oneasy and hostile like; it weakened my wolf wide awake, so I begin to look about for a man I *could* lick and *no mistake!* The little fiddler cum a scrougin past, holdin his fiddle up over his head to keep it *in tune,* for the fitin was gettin tolerable brisk. You're the one, thinks I, and jist I grabbed the dough-tray and split it plumb open over his head! *He* rotted down, right thar, and I paddled his 'tother end with one of the pieces!—while I was a molifyin my feelins in that way his gall slip'd up behind me and fecht'd me a rake with the pot-hooks. Jule Sawyer was *thar,* and jist *anexed to her rite* off, and a mity nice fite it was. Jule carried enuf har from hir hed to make a sifter, and striped and checked her face nice, like a partridge-net hung on a white fence. She hollered fur hir fiddler, but oh, shaw! he coudent do hir a bit of good; he was too buisy a rubbin first his broken head and then his blistered extremities, so when I thought Jule had given her a plenty I pulled hir off and put hir in a good humor by given hir about as many kisses as would cover a barn door.

Well, I thought at last, if I had a drink I'd be *about done,* so I started for the creek; *and* the first thing I saw was more stars with my eyes shut than I ever did with them open. I looked round, and it was the little fiddler's *big brother! I know'd what it meant,* so we locked horns without a word, thar all alone, and I do think we fit an hour. At last some fellers hearn the jolts at the house, and they cum and *dug us out,* for we had fit into a hole whar a big pine stump had burnt out, and thar we was, up to our girths a peggin away, face to face, and *no dodgin!*

Well, it is now sixteen days since that fite, and last night Jule picked gravels out of my knees as big as squirell shot. Luck raythe run agin me

that nite, fur I dident lick eny body but the fiddler, and had three fites—but Jule licked her gall, that's some comfort, and I suppose a feller cant *always* win! Arter my fite in the ground we made friends all round (except the fiddler—he's hot yet,) and danced and liquored at the tail of every Reel till sun up, when them that was sober enuff went home, and them that was *wounded* staid whar they fell. *I* was in the list of wounded, but could have got away if my bark-mill hadn't *ground* off the saplin and gone home without a parting word; so Dick and Jule had to ride "Shanks' mar," and a rite peart *four-legged* nag she is. She was *weak* in *two* of hir legs, but 'tother two—oh, my stars and possum dogs! they make a man swaller tobacker jist to look at 'em, and feel sorter like a June bug was crawlin up his trowses and the waistband too tite for it to git out. I'm agoin to marry Jule, I swar I am, and *sich* a cross! Think of a locomotive and a cotton gin! Who! whoopee!

That's Dick Harlan's story, Mr. Editor, and if the man "In the Swamp" could see Dick at a *Knob Dance* he would think that something besides politicks and religion occupied the mind of *some* of the inhabitants of the "peaceful valley."

Is Mr. Free dead? I have a yarn to spin on him, also, one about "Sleep Walking," and I will do it some day if I can over come my laziness. You see I am a *hot* hand at the *location* of capital letters and puntuation, (the spelling is Dick's). If you think I have made one "capital" letter I shall be agreeably disappointed.

Your Friend,
SUGARTAIL.

CUPPING
on
THE STERNUM

H. C. L., OF MISSISSIPPI

This tale appeared originally in the Spirit of the Times *1846 August 22, p. 301. It was erroneously attributed to the Swamp Doctor, "Madison Tensas," who merely sent it in to the* Spirit.

CUPPING
on
THE STERNUM

H. C. L., OF MISSISSIPPI

I HAD been a student of medicine about three weeks, and had got as far as cupping, cathartics, and castor oil, in the noble science of physic, when, as I was sitting in the office, investigating by induction the medicinal properties of a jar of tamarinds, I received a note from my preceptor which ran thus:—

"Mr. L.—You will please take the large cups and scarificator, together with a large blister, up to Mr. J., and cup his negro girl Chaney very freely over the *sternum;* after you have cupped her, apply the blister over the same, as she has inflammation of the lungs."

In anatomy, the *sternum* is that portion of the osseous system known in common parlance as the "breast bone," but at that time I was ignorant of the fact. I had not studied anatomy, and in my ignorance and simplicity of heart, imagined that the doctor wanted her to be cupped and blistered "a posteriori," or in other words, over the "seat," and that he had put the "um" to the "stern" in the note, merely for sport, or, it might have been the Latin termination of the word "stern." Filled with a sense of the delicacy and momentous import of my duty, I provided myself with the necessaries, and proceeded to cup Chaney on the *sternum.*

By way of parenthesis, let me create an idea of my patient, so that you may appreciate the field of my operation.

Just imagine a butcher's block five feet long and four feet through at the butt, converted into a fat bouncing negro wench, with smaller blocks appended for limbs, and you will have a faint conception of the figure and proportions of the delectable portion of humanity upon whom my curative capabilities were to be exhibited.

"How are you to-day, Chaney?" said I, as entering the cabin of my patient, I stood before her.

"Oh, massa young doctor," said she, "I does feel 'mazing bad—the mis'ry in my bosom almost broke my heart; I can scasely perspire," (*re*spire, I suppose she meant, as, judging from the big drops which, like ebony beads, chased each other down her gleaming neck, I thought that she perspired beautifully).

"I am very sorry to hear it, Chaney; the doctor has sent me up here to cup and blister you, and I hope it will relieve you entirely."

"Well, the Lord's will and the doctor's be done; this anguished sister be's ready"—and she proceeded to divest her bosom of its concealments, thinking that she had to be cupped over the seat of the pain; but it was a different *seat* than that, which my cups were destined to exhaust the atmosphere from.

"Stop, Chaney, I was not told to cup you on the breast, but on the *sternum,* so you'll have to turn over!"

"What!" shrieked she, rising straight up in the bed, a great deal whiter in the face than she had been for many a day; "you cup me on de *starn!* Massa young doctor, *tell* me, for de lub of prostituted 'manity, is you in airnest? Oh no, certainly, you is just joking—just making 'musement of de 'stresses of dis female!"

"No, Chaney, there is no mistake. The doctor says you must be cupped there, and it must and shall be done, so get ready."

"Oh, massa doctor, you must be mistaken—you must indeed! De pain no dere, but in my breast! How cupping dere goin' cure pain in de breast, eh? Tell me dat!"

"Well, Chaney, I don't know that I can do that, exactly, but I suppose it will be by sympathy. You know the stern and the bosom are not many feet apart. Any how, I am going to cup you there, if I have to call in help, so you had better consent."

Chaney, seeing that there was no retreat, agreed at last to the operation. Click! click! went the scarificator, and amidst the shouts of the patient and my awful solicitude for fear I might cut an artery, the "deed was did." But no blood flowed, nothing but grease, which trickled out slowly like molasses out of a worm hole. I saw that the cups were too in*fat*uated to draw blood from that quarter, so I removed them and applied the blister, and I expect fly-ointment was in demand about that time.

When the doctor returned, after an absence of several hours, he found the patient *entirely relieved,* and a blister drawn with about a tubful of water in its interior. I reckon she used chairs mighty little for a few weeks, and she hated the idea of the operation so bad that she burnt up a bran new dress just because it was *bumbazine,* and reminded her, by the first syllable, of the *seat* of "Cupping on the Sternum."

OVID BOLUS, ESQ.

JOSEPH G. BALDWIN

Baldwin, Flush Times in Alabama
and Mississippi, *1853.*

OVID BOLUS, ESQ.

JOSEPH G. BALDWIN

And what history of that halcyon period, ranging from the year of Grace, 1835, to 1837; that golden era, when shin-plasters were the sole currency; when bank-bills were "as thick as Autumn leaves in Vallambrosa," and credit was a franchise—what history of those times would be complete, that left out the name of Ovid Bolus? As well write the biography of Prince Hal, and forbear all mention of Falstaff. In law phrase, the thing would be a "deed without name," and void; a most unpardonable *casus ommissus*.

I cannot trace, for reasons the sequel suggests, the early history, much less the birth-place, pedigree, and juvenile associations of this worthy. Whence he or his forbears got his name or how, I don't know: but for the fact that it is to be inferred he got it in infancy, I should have thought he borrowed it: he borrowed every thing else he ever had, such things as he got under the credit system only excepted: in deference, however, to the axiom, that there is some exception to all general rules, I am willing to believe that he got this much honestly, by *bona fide* gift or inheritance, and without false pretence.

I have had a hard time of it in endeavoring to assign to Bolus his lead-

ing vice: I have given up the task in despair; but I have essayed to designate that one which gave him, in the end, most celebrity. I am aware that it is invidious to make comparisons, and to give pre-eminence to one over other rival qualities and gifts, where all have high claims to distinction: but, then, the stern justice of criticism, in this case, requires a discrimination, which, to be intelligible and definite, must be relative and comparative. I, therefore, take the responsibility of saying, after due reflection, that in my opinion, Bolus's reputation stood higher for lying than for anything else: and in thus assigning pre-eminence to this poetic property, I do it without any desire to derogate from other brilliant characteristics belonging to the same general category, which have drawn the wondering notice of the world.

Some men are liars from interest; not because they have no regard for truth, but because they have less regard for it than for gain: some are liars from vanity, because they would rather be well thought of by others, than have reason for thinking well of themselves: some are liars from a sort of necessity, which overbears, by the weight of temptation, the sense of virtue: some are enticed away by the allurements of pleasure, or seduced by evil example and education. Bolus was none of these: he belonged to a higher department of the fine arts, and to a higher class of professors of this sort of Belles-Lettres. Bolus was a natural liar, just as some horses are natural pacers, and some dogs natural setters. What he did in that walk, was from the irresistible promptings of instinct, and a disinterested love of art. His genius and his performances were free from the vulgar alloy of interest or temptation. Accordingly he did not labor a lie: he lied with relish: he lied with a coming appetite, growing with what it fed on: he lied from the delight of invention and the charm of fictitious narrative. It is true he applied his art to the practical purposes of life; but in so far did he glory the more in it; just as an ingenious machinist rejoices that his invention, while it has honored science, has also supplied a common want.

Bolus's genius for lying was encyclopediacal: it was what German criticism calls many-sided. It embraced all subjects without distinction or partiality. It was equally good upon all, "from grave to gay, from lively to severe."

Bolus's lying came from his greatness of soul and his comprehensiveness of mind. The truth was too small for him. Fact was too dry and common-place for the fervor of his genius. Besides, great as was his memory—for he even remembered the outlines of his chief lies—his invention was still larger. He had a great contempt for history and historians. He thought them tame and timid cobblers; mere tinkers on other people's wares,—simple parrots and magpies of other men's sayings or doings; borrowers of and acknowledged debtors for others' chattels, got without skill; they had no separate estate in their ideas: they were bailees of goods, which they did not pretend to hold by adverse title; buriers of talents in napkins making no usury; barren and unprofitable non-producers in the intellectual vineyard—*nati consumere fruges.*

He adopted a fact occasionally to start with, but, like a Sheffield razor and the crude ore, the workmanship, polish and value were all his own: a Thibet shawl could as well be credited to the insensate goat that grew the wool, as the author of a fact Bolus honored with his artistical skill, could claim to be the inventor of the story.

His experiments upon credulity, like charity began at home. He had long torn down the partition wall between his imagination and his memory. He had long ceased to distinguish between the impressions made upon his mind by what came *from* it, and what came *to* it: all ideas were facts to him.

Bolus's life was not a common man's life. His world was not the hard, work-day world the groundlings live in: he moved in a sphere of poetry: he lived amidst the ideal and romantic. Not that he was not practical enough, when he chose to be: by no means. He bought goods and chattels, lands and tenements, like other men; but he got them under a state of poetic illusion, and paid for them in an imaginary way. Even the titles he gave were not of the *earthy* sort—they were sometimes *clouded*. He gave notes, too,—how well I know it!—like other men; he paid them like himself.

How well he asserted the Spiritual over the Material! How he delighted to turn an abstract idea into concrete cash—to make a few blots of ink, representing a little thought, turn out a labor-saving machine, and bring into his pocket money which many days of hard exhausting labor would

not procure! What pious joy it gave him to see the days of the Good Samaritan return, and the hard hand of avarice relax its grasp on land and negroes, pork and clothes, beneath the soft speeches and kind promises of future rewards—blending in the act the three cardinal virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity; while, in the result, the chief of these three was *Charity!*

There was something sublime in the idea—this elevating the spirit of man to its true and primeval dominion over things of sense and grosser matter.

It is true, that in these practical romances, Bolus was charged with a defective taste in repeating himself. The justice of the charge must be, at least, partially acknowledged: this I know from a client, to whom Ovid sold a tract of land after having sold it twice before: I cannot say, though, that his forgetting to mention this circumstance made any difference, for Bolus originally had no title.

There was nothing narrow, sectarian, or sectional in Bolus's lying. It was on the contrary broad and catholic. It had no respect to times or places. It was as wide, illimitable, as elastic and variable as the air he spent in giving it expression. It was a generous, gentlemanly, wholesouled faculty. It was often employed on occasions of thrift, but no more; and no more zealously on these than on others of no profit to himself. He was an Egotist, but a magnificent one; he was not a liar because an egotist, but an egotist because a liar. He usually made himself the hero of the romantic exploits and adventures he narrated; but his was not so much to exalt himself, as because it was more convenient to his art. He had nothing malignant or invidious in his nature. If he exalted himself, it was seldom or never to the disparagement of others, unless, indeed, those others were merely imaginary persons, or too far off to be hurt. He would as soon lie for you as for himself. It was all the same, so there was something doing in his line of business, except in those cases in which his necessities required to be fed at your expense.

He did not confine himself to mere lingual lying: one tongue was not enough for the business he had on hand. He acted lies as well. Indeed, sometimes his very silence was a lie. He made nonentity fib for him, and performed wondrous feats by a "masterly inactivity."

The *personnel* of this distinguished Votary of the Muse, was happily fitted to his art. He was strikingly handsome. There was something in his air and bearing almost princely, certainly quite distinguished. His manners were winning, his address frank, cordial and flowing. He was built after the model and structure of Bolingbroke in his youth, *Americanized* and *Hoosierized* a little by a "raising in," and an adaptation to, the Backwoods. He was fluent but choice of diction, a little sonorous in the structure of his sentences to give effect to a voice like an organ. His countenance was open and engaging, usually sedate of expression, but capable of any modifications at the shortest notice. Add to this his intelligence, shrewdness, tact, humor, and that he was a ready debater and elegant declaimer, and had the gift of bringing out, to the fullest extent, his resources, and you may see that Ovid, in a new country, was a man apt to make no mean impression. He drew the loose population around him, as the magnet draws iron filings. He was the man of the "boys,"—then a numerous and influential class. His generous profusion and free-handed manner impressed them as the bounty of Caesar the loafing commonalty of Rome: Bolus was no niggard. He never higgled or chaffered about small things. He was as free with his own money—if he ever had any of his own—as with yours. If he never paid borrowed money, he never asked payment of others. If you wished him to lend you any, you were losing time in counting it, for you never saw any thing of it again: Shallow's funded debt on Falstaff were as safe an investment: this would have been an equal commerce, but, unfortunately for Bolus's friends, the proportion between his disbursements and receipts was something scant. Such a spendthrift never made a track even in the flush times of 1836. It took as much to support him as a first class steamboat. His bills at the groceries were as long as John Q. Adams' Abolition petition, or, if pasted together, would have matched the great Chartist memorial. He would as soon treat a regiment or charter the grocery for the day, as any other way; and after the crowd had heartily drank—some of them "laying their souls in soak,"—if he did not have the money convenient—as when did he?—he would fumble in his pocket, mutter something about nothing less than a $100 bill, and direct the score, with a lordly familiarity, to be charged to his account.

Ovid had early possessed the faculty of ubiquity. He had been born in more places than Homer. In an hour's discourse, *he* would, with more than the speed of Ariel, travel at every point of the compass, from Portland to San Antonio, some famous adventure always occurring just as he "rounded to," or while stationary, though he did not remain longer than to see it. He was present at every important debate in the Senate at Washington, and had heard every popular speaker on the hustings, at the bar and in the pulpit, in the United States. He had been concerned in many important causes with Grymes and against Mazereau in New Orleans, and had borne no small share in the fierce forensic battles, which, with singular luck, *he* and Grymes always won in the courts of the Crescent City. And such frolics as they had when they laid aside their heavy armor, after the heat and burden of the day! Such gambling! A negro *ante* and twenty on the call, was moderate playing. What lots of "Ethiopian captives" and other plunder he *raked down* vexed Arithmetic to count and credulity to believe; and, had it not been for Bolus's generosity in giving "the boys" a chance to win back by *doubling off on the high hand,* there is no knowing what changes of owners would not have occurred in the Rapides or on the German Coast.

The Florida war and the Texas Revolution, had each furnished a brilliant theatre for Ovid's chivalrous emprise. Jack Hays and he were great chums. Jack and he had many a hearty laugh over the odd trick of Ovid, in lassoing a Camanche Chief, while galloping a stolen horse bare-backed, up the San Saba hills. But he had the rig on Jack again, when he made him charge on a brood of about twenty Camanches, who had got into a mot of timber in the prairies, and were shooting their arrows from the covert, Ovid, with a six-barrelled rifle, taking them on the wing as Jack rode in and flushed them!

It was an affecting story and feelingly told, that of his and Jim Bowie's rescuing an American girl from the Apaches, and returning her to her parents in St. Louis; and it would have been still more tender, had it not been for the unfortunate necessity Bolus was under of shooting a brace of gay lieutenants on the border, one frosty morning, before breakfast, back of the fort, for taking unbecoming liberties with the fair damosel, the spoil of his bow and spear.

But the girls Ovid courted, and the miraculous adventures he had met with in love beggared by comparison, all the fortune of war had done for him. Old Nugent's daughter, Sallie, was his narrowest escape. Sallie was accomplished to the romantic extent of two ocean steamers, and four blocks of buildings in Boston, separated only from immediate "perception and pernancy," by the contingency of Old Nugent's recovering from a confirmed dropsy, for which he had been twice ineffectually tapped. The day was set—the presents made—superb of course—the guests invited: the old Sea Captain insisted on Bolus's setting his negroes free, and taking five thousand dollars apiece for the loss. Bolus's love for the "peculiar institution" wouldn't stand it. Rather than submit to such degradation, Ovid broke off the match, and left Sallie broken-hearted; a disease from which she did not recover until about six months afterwards, when she ran off with the mate of her father's ship, the Sea Serpent, in the Rio trade.

Gossip and personal anecdote were the especial subjects of Ovid's elocution. He was intimate with all the notabilities of the political circles. He was a privileged visitor of the political green-room. He was admitted back into the laboratory where the political thunder was manufactured, and into the office where the magnetic wires were worked. He knew the origin of every party question and movement, and had a finger in every pie the party cooks of Tammany baked for the body politic.

One thing in Ovid I can never forgive. This was his coming it over poor Ben. I don't object to it on the score of the swindle. That was to have been expected. But swindling Ben was degrading the dignity of the art. True, it illustrated the universality of his sciences, but it lowered it to a beggarly process of mean deception. There was not skill in it. It was little better than crude larceny. A child could have done it; it had as well been done to a child. It was like catching a cow with a lariat, or setting a steel trap for a pet pig. True, Bolus had nearly practised out of custom. He had worn his art threadbare. Men, who could afford to be cheated, had all been worked up or been scared away. Besides, Frost couldn't be put off. He talked of money in a most ominous connection with blood. The thing could be settled by a bill of exchange. Ben's name was unfortunately good—the amount some $1,600. Ben *had* a fine tract of land in S—r. He has not got it now. Bolus only gave Ben one wrench—that was

enough. Ben never breathed easy afterwards. All the V's and X's of ten years' hard practice, went in that penful of ink. Fie! Bolus, Monroe Edwards wouldn't have done that. He would sooner have sunk to the level of some honest calling for a living, than have put his profession to so mean a shift. I can conceive of but one extenuation; Bolus was on the lift for Texas, and the desire was natural to qualify himself for citizenship.

The genius of Bolus, strong in its unassisted strength, yet gleamed out more brilliantly under the genial influence of the "the rosy." With boon companions and "reaming suats," it was worth while to hear him of a winter evening. He could "gild the palpable and the familiar, with golden exhalations of the dawn." The most common-place objects became dignified. There was a history to the commonest articles about him; that book was given him by Mr. Van Buren—the walking stick was a present from Gen. Jackson. A thrice-watered Monongahela, just drawn from the grocery hard by, was the last of a distillation of 1825, smuggled in from Ireland, and presented to him by a friend in New Orleans, on easy terms with the collector; the cigars, not too fragrant, were of a box sent him by a schoolmate from Cuba—he had met with an adventure there, the impression of which never could be effaced from his mind. He had gone, at the instance of Don Carlos y Cubanos, (an intimate class-mate in a Kentucky Catholic College,) whose life he had saved from a mob in Louisville, at the imminent risk of his own. The Don had a sister of blooming sixteen, the least of whose charms was two or three plantations, some hundreds of slaves, and a suitable garnish of doubloons, accumulated during her minority, in the hands of her uncle and guardian, the Captain General. All went well with the young lovers—for such, of course, they were—until Bolus, with his usual frank indiscretion, in a conversation with the Priest, avowed himself a Protestant. Then came trouble. Every effort was made to convert him; but Bolus's faith resisted the eloquent tongue of the Priest, and the more eloquent eyes of Donna Isabella. The brother pleaded the old friendship—urged a seeming and formal conformity—the Captain General argued the case like a politician —the Senorita like a warm and devoted woman. All would not do. The Captain General forbade his longer sojourn on the Island. Bolus took

leave of the fair Senorita: the parting interview held in the orange bower, was affecting: Donna Isabella, with dishevelled hair, threw herself at his feet; the tears streamed from her eyes: in liquid tones, broken by grief, she implored him to relent—reminded him of her love, of her trust in him, and of the consequences—now not much longer to be concealed—of that love and trust; ("though I protest," Bolus would say, "I don't know what she meant exactly by *that.*") "Gentlemen," Bolus continued, "I confess to the weakness—I wavered—but then my eyes happened to fall on the breast-pin with a lock of my mother's hair—I recovered my courage: I shook her gently from me. I felt my last hold on earth was loosened—my last hope of peace destroyed. Since that hour, my life has been a burden. Yes, gentlemen, you see before you a broken man—a martyr to his Religion. But, away with these melancholy thoughts: boys, pass around the jorum." And wiping his eyes, he drowned the wasting sorrow in a long draught of the poteen; and, being much refreshed, was able to carry the burden on a little further,—*videlicet,* to the next lie.

It must not be supposed that Bolus was destitute of the tame virtue of prudence—or that this was confined to the avoidance of the improvident habit of squandering his money in paying old debts. He took reasonably good care of his person. He avoided all unnecessary exposures, chiefly from a patriotic desire, probably, of continuing his good offices to his country. His recklessness was, for the most part, lingual. To hear him talk, one might suppose he held his carcass merely for a target to try guns and knives upon; or, that the business of his life was to draw men up to ten paces or less, for sheer improvement in marksmanship. Such exploits as he had gone through with, dwarfed the heroes of romance to very pigmy and sneaking proportions. Pistol at the Bridge when he bluffed at honest Fluellen, might have envied the swashbuckler airs, Ovid would sometimes put on. But I never could exactly identify the place he had laid out for his burying-ground. Indeed, I had occasion to know that he declined to understand several not very ambiguous hints, upon which he might, with as good a grace as Othello, have spoken, not to mention one or two pressing invitations which his modesty led him to refuse. I do not know that the base sense of fear had any thing to do with these declinations: possibly he might have thought he had done his share of fighting,

and did not wish to monopolize: or his principles forbade it—I mean those which opposed his paying a debt: knowing he could not cheat that inexorable creditor, Death, of his claim, he did the next thing to it; which was to delay and shirk payment as long as possible.

It remains to add a word of criticism on this great *Lyric* artist.

In lying, Bolus was not only a successful, but he was a very able practitioner. Like every other eminent artist, he brought all his faculties to bear upon his art. Though quick of perception and prompt of invention, he did not trust himself to the inspirations of his genius for *improvising* a lie, when he could well premeditate one. He deliberately built up the substantial masonry, relying upon the occasion and its accessories, chiefly for embellishment and collateral supports: as Burke excogitated the more solid parts of his great speeches, and left unprepared only the illustrations and fancy-work.

Bolus's manner was, like every truly great man's, his own. It was excellent. He did not come blushing up to a lie, as some otherwise very passable liars do, as if he were making a mean compromise between his guilty passion or morbid vanity, and a struggling conscience. Bolus had long since settled all disputes with *his* conscience. He and it were on very good terms, at least, if there was no affection between the couple, there was no fuss in the family; or, if there were any scenes or angry passages, they were reserved for strict privacy and never got out. My own opinion is, that he was as destitute of the article as an ostrich. Thus he came to his work bravely, cheerfully and composedly. The delights of composition, invention and narration, did not fluster his style or agitate his delivery. He knew how, in the tumult of passion, to assume the "temperance to give it smoothness." A lie never ran away with him, as it is apt to do with young performers: he could always manage and guide it; and to have seen him fairly mounted, would have given you some idea of the polished elegance of D'Orsay, and the superb *manage* of Murat. There is a tone and manner of narration different from those used in delivering ideas just conceived; just as there is a difference between the sound of the voice in reading and speaking. Bolus knew this, and practised on it. When he was narrating, he put the facts in order, and seemed to speak them out of his memory; but not formally, or as if by rote.

He would stop himself to correct a date; recollect he was wrong—he was *that* year at the White Sulphur or Saratoga, &c.: having got the date right, the names of persons present would be incorrect, &c.: and these he corrected in turn. A stranger hearing him, would have feared the marring of a good story by too fastidious a conscientiousness in the narrator.

His zeal in pursuit of a lie under difficulties, was remarkable. The society around him—if such it could be called—was hardly fitted, without some previous preparation, for an immediate introduction to Almack's or the classic precincts of Gore House. The manners of the natives were rather plain than ornate, and candor rather than polish predominated in their conversation. Bolus had need of some forbearance to withstand the interruptions and cross-examinations, with which his revelations were sometimes received. But he possessed this in a remarkable degree. I recollect, on one occasion, when he was giving an account of a providential escape he was signally favored with, (when boarded by a pirate off the Isle of Pines, and he pleaded masonry, and gave a sign he had got out of the Disclosures of Morgan,) Tom Johnson interrupted him to say that he had heard *that* before, (which was more than Bolus had ever done.) B. immediately rejoined, that he had, he believed, given him, Tom, a *running* sketch of the incident. "Rather," said Tom, "I think, a *lying* sketch." Bolus scarcely smiled, as he replied, that Tom was a wag, and couldn't help turning the most serious things into jests; and went on with his usual brilliancy, to finish the narrative. Bolus did not overcrowd his canvas. His figures were never confused, and the subordinates and accessories did not withdraw attention from the main and substantive lie. He never squandered his lies profusely: thinking, with the poet, that "bounteous, not prodigal, is kind Nature's hand," he kept the golden mean between penuriousness and prodigality; never stingy of his lies, he was not wasteful of them, but was rather forehanded than pushed, or embarrassed, having usually fictitious stock to be freshly put on 'change, when he wished to "make a raise." In most of his fables, he inculcated but a single leading idea; but contrived to make the several facts of the narrative fall in very gracefully with the principal scheme.

The rock on which many promising young liars, who might otherwise have risen to merited distinction, have split, is vanity: this marplot vice

betrays itself in the exultation manifested on the occasion of a decided hit, an exultation too inordinate for mere recital, and which betrays authorship; and to betray authorship, in the present barbaric, moral and intellectual condition of the world is fatal. True, there seems to be some inconsistency here. Dickens and Bulwer can do as much lying, for money too, as they choose, and no one blames them, any more than they would blame a lawyer regularly *fee'd* to do it; but let any man, gifted with the same genius, try his hand at it, not deliberately and in writing, but merely orally, and ugly names are given him, and he is proscribed! Bolus heroically suppressed exultation over the victories his lies achieved.

Alas! for the beautiful things of Earth, its flowers, its sunsets—its lovely girls—its lies—brief and fleeting are their date. Lying is a very delicate accomplishment. It must be tenderly cared for, and jealously guarded. It must not be overworked. Bolus forgot this salutary caution. The people found out his art. However dull the commons are as to other matters, they get sharp enough after a while, to whatever concerns their bread and butter. Bolus not having confined his art to political matters, sounded, at last, the depths, and explored the limits of popular credulity. The denizens of this degenerate age, had not the disinterestedness of Prince Hal, who "cared not how many fed at his cost"; they got tired, at last, of promises to pay. The credit system, common before as pump-water, adhering like the elective franchise to every voter, began to take the worldly wisdom of Falstaff's mercer, and ask security; and security liked something more substantial than plausible promises. In this forlorn condition of the country, returning to its savage state, and abandoning the refinements of a ripe Anglo-Saxon civilization for the sordid safety of Mexican or Chinese modes of traffic; deserting the sweet simplicity of its ancient trustiness and the poetic illusions of Augustus Tomlinson, for the vulgar saws of poor Richard—Bolus, with a sigh like that breathed out by his great prototype after his apostrophe to London, gathered up, one bright moonlight night, his articles of value, shook the dust from his feet, and departed from a land unworthy of his longer sojourn. With that delicate consideration for the feelings of his friends, which, like the politeness of Charles II., never forsook him, he spared them the pain of a parting interview. He left no greetings of kindness; no messages of love:

nor did he ask assurances of their lively remembrance. It was quite unnecessary. In every house he had left an autograph, in every ledger a souvenir. They will never forget him. Their connection with him will be ever regarded as

> —"The *greenest* spot
> In memory's waste."

Poor Ben, whom he had honored with the last marks of his confidence, can scarcely speak of him to this day, without tears in his eyes. Far away towards the setting sun he hied him, until, at last, with a hermit's disgust at the degradation of the world, like Ignatius turned monk, he pitched his tabernacle amidst the smiling prairies that sleep in vernal beauty, in the shadow of the San Saba mountains. There let his mighty genius rest. It has earned repose. We leave Themistocles to his voluntary exile.

THE HOOSIER
and
THE SALT PILE

WILLIAM T. THOMPSON

From Major Jones's Courtship, *enlarged edition with thirteen additional humorous sketches, New York, 1872.*

THE HOOSIER
and
THE SALT PILE

WILLIAM T. THOMPSON

IT IS VERY refreshin in these days of progress, after rattlin over the country for days and nights, at the rate of twenty miles a ower in a railroad car—with your mouth full of dust and smoke, and with sich a everlastin clatter in your ears that you can't hear yourself think—to git into a good, old-fashioned stage-coach. Ther's something sociable and cosey in stage-coach travelin, so different from the bustle and confusion of a railroad, whar people are whirled along "slam bang to eternal smash," like they wer so many bales and boxes of dry-goods and groceries, without so much as a chance of seein whar they're gwine, or of takin any interest in ther feller sufferers. I love to hear the pop of the whip and the interestin conversation between the driver and his horses; and I like the constant variation in the motion of the stage, the rattle of the wheels over the stones, the stillness of the drag through the heavy sand, the lunging and pitching into the ruts and gullies, the slow pull up the steep hills, the rush down agin, and the splashin of the horses' feet and the wheels in the water and mud. And then one has time to see the country he's passin through, to count the rails in the panels of the fences, and the wimen and children in the doors of the houses, to notice the appearance of the craps and the condi-

tion of the stock on the farms, and now and then to say a word to the people on the roadside. All these things is pleasant, after a long voyage on the railroad. But what's still more agreeable about stage-coach travelin, is that we have a oppertunity of makin the acquaintance of our feller passengers, of conversin with 'em and studdyin ther traits of character, which from the strikin contrast they often present, never fail to amuse if they don't interest our mind.

Some years ago I had a tolerably fair specimen of a stage-coach ride from Warrenton to Milledgeville. The road wasn't the best in the world, and didn't run through the most interestin part of Georgia, but we had a good team, a good stage, and a first-rate driver, what could sing like a camp-meetin and whistle like a locomotive, and the company was jest about as good a one as could be jumped up for sich a occasion. Ther was nine of us besides the driver, and I don't believe ther ever was a crowd of the same number that presented a greater variety of characters. Ther was a old gentleman in black, with big round spectacles, and a gold headed cane; a dandy gambler, with a big diamond breast-pin and more gold chains hangin round him than would hang him; a old hardshell preacher, as they call 'em in Gergia, with the biggest mouth and the ugliest teeth I ever seed; a circus clown, whose breath smelled strong enough of whiskey to upset the stage; a cross old maid, as ugly as a tar-bucket; a butiful young school-gall, with rosy cheeks and mischievous bright eyes; a cattle-drover from Indiany, who was gwine to New Orleans to git a army contract for beef, and myself.

For a while after we started from Warrenton nobody didn't have much to say. The young lady put her green vail over her face and leaned her head back in the corner; the old maid, after a row with the driver about her band-boxes, sot up straight in her seat and looked as sharp as a steel-trap; the old gentleman with the spectacles drummed his fingers on his cane and looked out of the coach-winder; the circus-man tried to look interestin; the gambler went to sleep; the preacher looked solemn; and the hoosier stuck his head out of the winder on his side to look at the cattle what we passed every now and then.

"This aint no great stock country," ses he to the old gentleman with the specs.

"No, sir," ses the old gentleman. "There's very little grazing here. The range in these parts is pretty much worn out."

Then ther was nothing said for some time. Bimeby the hoosier opened agin.

"It's the d—st place for 'simmon-trees and turkey-buzzards I ever did see."

The old gentleman didn't say nothin, and the preacher fetched a long groan. The young lady smiled through her vail, and the old maid snapped her eyes and looked sideways at the speaker.

"Don't make much beef down here, I reckon," ses the hoosier.

"No," ses the old gentleman.

"Well, I don't see how in the h——l they manage to live in a country whar ther aint no ranges, and they don't make no beef. A man aint considered worth a cuss in Indiany what hasn't got his brand on a hundred head or so of cattle."

"Your's is a great beef country, I believe," ses the old gentleman.

"Well, sir, it aint nothing else. A man that's got sense enough to foller his own cow-bell, with us, aint no danger of starvin. I'm gwine down to Orleans to see if I can't git a contract out of Uncle Sam, to feed the boys what's been lickin them infernal Mexicans so bad. I spose you've seed them cussed lies what's been in the newspapers about the Indiany boys at Bona Vista?"

"I've read some accounts of the battle," ses the old gentleman, "that didn't give a very flattering account of the conduct of some of our troops."

With that, the Indiany man went into a full explanation of the affair, and gittin warmed up as he went along, begun to cuss and swear like he'd been through a dozen campaigns himself.

The old preacher listened to him with evident signs of displeasure, twistin and groanin every time he uttered a big oath, until he couldn't stand it no longer.

"My friend," ses he, "you must excuse me, but your conversation would be a great deal more interestin to me, and I'm sure it would please the company much better, if you wouldn't swear so terribly. It's very wicked to swear so, and I hope you'll have respect for our religious feelins, if you hain't got no respect for your Maker."

If the hoosier had been struck with a clap of thunder and lightning he couldn't been more completely tuck aback. He shut his mouth right in the middle of what he was sayin, and looked at the preacher, while his face got as red as fire.

"Swearin," continued the old hardshell, "is a terrible bad practise, and ther aint no use in it no how. The Bible says 'swear not at all,' and I spose you know the commandments about taking the Lord's name in vain."

The hoosier didn't open his mouth.

"I know," ses the old preacher, "a great many people swear without thinkin, and that some people don't believe in the Bible."

And then he went on to preach a regular sermon agin, and to quote the Scripture like he knowed the whole Bible by heart. In the course of his argyments he undertook to prove the Scriptures to be true, and told us all about the miracles and prophecies and their fulfillment. The old gentleman with the cane tuck a part in the conversation, and the hoosier listened without ever once openin his head.

"I've jest heard of a gentleman," sed the preacher, "what has been to the Holy Land, and went all over the Bible country. It's astonishin what wonderful things he seed thar. He was at Soddom and Gomorrow, and seed the place whar Lot's wife fell!"

"Ah?" ses the old gentleman with the specs.

"Yes," ses the preacher. "He went to the very spot, and what's the most remarkablest thing of all, he seed the pillar of salt what she was turned into."

"Is it possible?" ses the old gentleman.

The hoosier's countenance all at once brightened up, and he opened his mouth wide.

"Yes, sir; he seed the salt standin thar to this day."

The hoosier's curiosity was raised to a pint beyond endurance.

"What!" ses he, "real genewine good salt?"

"Yes, sir, a pillar of salt jest as it was when that wicked woman was punished for her disobedience."

All but the gambler, who was snoozin in the corner of the coach, looked

at the preacher—the hoosier with an expression of countenance that plainly tcld that his mind was powerfully convicted of a important fact.

"Standin right out in the open air?" he axed.

"Yes, sir,—right out in the open field where she fell."

"Well," ses the hoosier, "all I've got to say is, *if she'd drap'd in Indiany, the cattle would lick'd her up long ago!*"

DISCHARGED ON HIS
Own
RECOGNIZANCE

W. H. SPARKS

Sparks, W. H. Memories of Fifty Years, *Phila., 1870, pp. 484–5.*

DISCHARGED ON HIS Own RECOGNIZANCE

W. H. SPARKS

When Newton County was first organized, it was made the duty of Judge John M. Dooly to hold the first court. There then lived and kept the only tavern in the new town of Covington, a man of huge proportions, named Ned Williams, usually called Uncle Ned,—he, as well as Dooly, have long slept with their fathers. The location of the village and courthouse had been of recent selection, and Uncle Ned's tavern was one of those peculiar buildings improvised for temporary purposes—a log cabin, designated, in some parts of Georgia at that time, as a two-storied house, with both stories on the ground; in other words, a double-penned cabin with passage between. Uncle Ned had made ample provision for the Bench and Bar. One pen of his house was appropriated to their use. There was a bed in each corner, and there were nine lawyers, including the judge. The interstices between the cabin poles were open, but there was no window, and but one door, which had to be closed to avoid too close companionship with the dogs of the household. It was June, and Georgia June weather, sultry, warm, still, especially at night. In the centre there stood a deal table of respectable dimensions, and this served the double purpose of dining-table and bedplace for one. Uncle Ned was polite and

exceedingly solicitous to please. He had scoured the country for supplies; it was too new for poultry or eggs, but acorns abounded, and pigs were plenty. They had never experienced want, and consequently were well-grown and fat. Uncle Ned had found and secured one which weighed some two hundred pounds. This he divided into halves longitudinally, and had barbecued the half intended for the use of the Bar and Bench. At dinner, on Monday, it was introduced upon a large wooden tray as the centre substantial dish for the dinner of the day. It was swimming in lard. There were side-dishes of potatoes and cold meats, appellated in Georgia collards, with quantities of corn-bread, with two bowls of hash from the lungs and liver of the pig, all reeking with the fire and summer heat. A scanty meal was soon made, but the tray and contents remained untouched.

The court continued three days, and was adjourned at noon of the fourth day, until the next term. Each day the tray and contents were punctual in their attendance. The depressed centre of the tray was a lake of molten lard, beneath which hid a majority of the pig. After dinner of the last day, all were ready to leave. When the meal was concluded, Dooly asked if all were done.

"Landlord," said the Judge, "will you give us your attention?"

Uncle Ned entered.

"Your will, Judge?" he asked.

"I wish you, sir, to discharge this hog on his own recognizance. We do not want any bail for his appearance at the next term."

''PERTATERS and TERNUPS''

"SPOONDRIFT"

This yarn first appeared in the Spirit of the Times, *N. Y., 1850 Aug. 3. The identity of the author is not known: he was said to have been a native of Columbia, South Carolina.*

''PERTATERS and TERNUPS''

"SPOONDRIFT"

ABOUT A stone's throw (by telegraph) to the southward of the Empire State, lies a country, sometimes known as the "Palmetto State." It does raise a fair "crop of spicy yarns, an' this is one of 'em."

C——a is something of a village, and noted as being cumbered by a wag of a young doctor, or perhaps it were better to say, that it contained a bran new, bright, and polished journeyman sawbones, just out of his time, and who loved a practical joke beyond all things else. Notwithstanding he was pitiless, sparing neither age, sex, nor condition, and as ready to hoax a friend as a stranger, he never lacked assistance from his acquaintances whenever he had concocted a "stringer." All are ready to assist a guy; consequently our "Pills" was at no loss for coadjutors.

Premise 3d.—The parallelogram which constitutes the "square" of the "settlins" aforewritten, is devoted to the business portion of the place, and contains several hotels, groceries, and what not, with "quiet retreats" for the "sovereigns," who there most do congregate. Of course the "square" is the market-place, and in one portion of it may always be found the farmers of the vicinity, with the products of their vegetable gardens, and fruit "plantins." The "Cracker" brings in his load, plants it near the walk, and waits for a bid.

An early bird was our doctor, and he generally "raked a worm" before breakfast. Sauntering round the market one morning, he espied a brawny Cracker 'tending a load of vegetables, upon the top of which was displayed a placard, fastened, a la finger-post, with the following inscription:

"PERTATERS AND TERNUPS"

One second, and all was arranged. With spectacles upon his nose, and face elongated, with every appearance of an anxious inquirer, the doctor bustled up to the owner of the "fruit."

Dr.—*Good*-morning, stranger.

Cracker.—Good-morn'n.

Dr.—What have you to sell?

C. (pointing to placard).—Pertaters en ternups.

Dr.—Got any eggs?

C.—No, I didn't bring none.

With this the doctor boomed, and making for the first grocery, he "put the boss on the lay." Ben broke for the Cracker, and a colloquy like the following ensued:

Ben.—Good-morn'n, stranger.

C.—Good-morn'n.

Ben.—What you got to sell?

C. (again pointing to placard).—Pertaters en ternups.

Ben.—Got any eggs?

C. (looking testy).—Aiggs? Aiggs be d—d.

Ad interim, the doctor had inserted himself into another "quiet retreat," where his instructions were duly repeated, and carried out by Ike in this wise:—

Ike (approaching).—*Good*-morning, stranger!

C. (eyeing him).—Good-morn'n.

Ike.—Wot ev *you* got to sell?

C. (pointing, and eyeing Ike very sharp).—Pertaters en ternups.

Ike (anxiously).—Got *any* eggs?

C. (looking fight at Ike).—*No*—Aiggs? *H—l,* no!

Meanwhile the energetic Dr. had accomplished his fourth eye-opener,

and enlisted the proprietor of the establishment in furtherance of the joke. Shaly, taking along with him a boy who toted a pair of very large baskets, presented himself to our vegetable tender. Shaly—obese, rubicund, coatless, fine teeth, age 30, weight 260 lbs.; boy, age 40, weight 110, mouth open on the back, several teeth, lips resembling a railroad embankment, eyes (of course) spread.

Shaly.—*Good*-morning, stranger? (interrogatively).

C. (looks at boy, and points to placard).—Good-morn'n.

Shaly.—What *have* you got to sell?

C. (surprised, but still points).—Pertaters en ternups.

Shaly (backing out a little, as if disappointed).—Got any *eggs?*

C. (first at Shaly and then at boy).—Aiggs! in *them* baskets!

Exit Shaly and boy. Enter an outsider, rather timid, but desires to buy *some* marketing. Sees the wagon, but not the sign.

Outsider.—Good-morning (timidly).

C. (curtly).—Yes—taters?

O.—No. Have you—

C. (short).—Ternups?

O. (deprecatingly).—No. Have you got any—

C. (wrathfully).—Aiggs en be d—d to yer! No, *Sir.*

Outsider leaves. Appears another of the Doctor's crowd. Examines cart and Cracker. Sees a box in front, and fixing his eye upon it, remarks—

Good-morning, stranger.

C. (slowly).—Good-morn'n.

Pur.—What have you got to sell?

C. (measuring our friend from head to heel, and evidently suspecting a hoax. Gent very grave, sedate, and business-like, anxiously awaits an answer. C. satisfied, says smilingly).—Pertaters en ternups.

Pur (craning forward, and looking at box in wagon)—Got any *eggs?*

C. (seizing "taters" in one hand, and "ternups" in t'other, shouts).—*Is* them *aiggs?* Kin you *see?* Em *I* aiggs? No, sir!

It would be an endless task to recount the dialogues of the various individuals who were "sent up" by our doctor to purchase eggs; suffice it to say that after "tendin' his load" during market hours, our unlucky jokee, badgered and baited with a constant recurrence of the inquiry for em-

bryo hens, not having succeeded in disposing of any of his "roots," concluded to "hitch up," and put for home and "a market."

On the outskirt of the "settlins," and on the Cracker's road homewards, stood a hotel, kept by a very worthy, jolly personage, yclept Mabin. Now Mabe was the soul of good nature, and very attentive to his guest, whether of high or low degree. The boys *did* say that he *drank*—if he *did not,* how did he attain his rotundity?

Our "pertaters" was acquainted with Mabe, and as he never omitted calling on his way out, he lit. Of course Mabe was innocent of the "string." Mabe hearing wheels, rolls himself out on the "pizarro," and hailed, as our friend was hitching old Ball for a short stop. Said Mabe—Good-morning, neighbour.

C. (carelessly).—Good-morn'n.

Mabe.—What have you got to sell?

C. (pricking up his ears, and advancing up the steps towards Mabe).—Hey?

Mabe.—What have you got to sell there? (Pointing to the cart.)

"Pertaters" paused a moment, and thrusting his hand into his pocket, drew forth an ancient jack-knife, the blade of which, from its numerous applications to a grindstone, was abbreviated to a length of about two inches. Opening it with a jerk, taking a firm grasp, and poising it threateningly, he slowly and impressively said—"Pertaters end ternups, Mabin—but don't yer say aiggs, Mabin! Ef yer do, I'll sample yer gizzard!"

THE CHARACTER of a NATIVE GEORGIAN

AUGUSTUS BALDWIN LONGSTREET

From Georgia Scenes, *by A. B. Longstreet. See Introduction.*

THE CHARACTER of a NATIVE GEORGIAN

A. B. LONGSTREET

THERE ARE some yet living who knew the man whose character I am about to delineate, and these will unanimously bear testimony that, if it be not faithfully drawn, it is not overdrawn. They cannot avouch for the truth of the anecdotes which I am about to relate of him, because of these they know nothing; but they will unhesitatingly declare that there is nothing herein ascribed to him of which he was incapable, and of which he would not readily have been the author, supposing the scenes in which I have placed him to be real, and the thoughts and actions attributed to him to have actually suggested themselves to him. They will further testify that the thoughts and actions are in perfect harmony with his general character.

I do not feel at liberty as yet to give the name of the person in question, and therefore he shall be designated for the present by the appellation of Ned Brace.

This man seemed to live only to amuse himself with his fellow-beings, and he possessed the rare faculty of deriving some gratification of his favorite propensity from almost every person whom he met, no matter what his temper, standing, or disposition. Of course he had opportunities

enough of exercising his uncommon gift, and he rarely suffered an opportunity to pass unimproved. The beau in the presence of his mistress, the fop, the pedant, the purse-proud, the over-fastidious and sensitive, were Ned's favorite game. These never passed him uninjured, and against such he directed his severest shafts. With these he commonly amused himself, by exciting in them every variety of emotion, under circumstances peculiarly ridiculous. He was admirably fitted to his vocation. He could assume any character, which his humor required him to personate, and he could sustain it to perfection. His knowledge of the character of others seemed to be intuitive.

It may seem remarkable, but it is true, that, though he lived his own peculiar life for about sixteen years, after he reached the age of manhood he never involved himself in a personal rencounter with any one. This was owing in part to his muscular frame, which few would be willing to engage, but more particularly to his adroitness in the management of his projects of fun. He generally conducted them in such a way as to render it impossible for any one to call him to account without violating all the rules of decency, politeness, and chivalry at once. But a few anecdotes of him will give the reader a much better idea of his character than he can possibly derive from a general description. If these fulfil the description which I have given of my hero, all will agree that he is no imaginary being; if they do not, it will only be because I am unfortunate in my selection. Having known him from his earliest manhood to his grave—for he was a native Georgian—I confess that I am greatly perplexed in determining what portions of his singular history to lay before the reader as a proper specimen of the whole. A three days' visit which I once made with him to Savannah placed him in a greater variety of scenes and among a greater diversity of characters than perhaps any other period of his life embracing no longer time; and, therefore, I will choose this for my purpose.

We reached Savannah just at nightfall of a cold December evening. As we approached the tavern of Mr. Blank, at which we designed to stop, Ned proposed to me that we should drop our acquaintance until *he* should choose to renew it. To this proposition I most cordially assented, for I knew that, so doing, I should be saved some mortifications, and avoid a

thousand questions which I would not know how to answer. According to this understanding, Ned lingered behind in order that I might reach the tavern alone.

On alighting at the public-house I was led into a large dining-room, at the entrance of which, to the right, stood the bar, opening into the dining-room. On the left, and rather nearer to the centre of the room, was a fireplace, surrounded by gentlemen. Upon entering the room my name was demanded at the bar; it was given, and I took my seat in the circle around the fire. I had been seated just long enough for the company to survey me to their satisfaction and resume their conversation, when Ned's heavy footsteps at the door turned the eyes of the company to the approaching stranger.

"Your name, sir, if you please?" said the restless little barkeeper, as he entered.

Ned stared at the question with apparent alarm, cast a fearful glance at the company, frowned, and shook his head in token of caution to the barkeeper; looked confused for a moment, then, as if suddenly recollecting himself, jerked a piece of paper out of his pocket, turned from the company, wrote on it with his pencil, handed it to the barkeeper, walked to the left of the fireplace, and took the most conspicuous seat in the circle. He looked at no one, spoke to no one, but, fixing his eyes on the fire, lapsed into a profound reverie.

The conversation, which had been pretty general before, stopped as short as if every man in the room had been shot dead. Every eye was fixed on Ned, and every variety of expression was to be seen on the countenances of the persons present. The landlord came in; the barkeeper whispered to him and looked at Ned. The landlord looked at him too with astonishment and alarm; the barkeeper produced a piece of paper, and both of them examined it, as if searching for fig-mite with the naked eye. They rose from the examination unsatisfied, and looked at Ned again. Those of the company who recovered first from their astonishment tried to revive the conversation, but the effort was awkward, met with no support, and failed. The barkeeper, for the first time in his life, became dignified and solemn, and left the bar to take care of itself. The landlord had a world of foolish questions to ask the gentlemen directly opposite to Ned,

for which purpose he passed round to them every two minutes, and the answer to none did he hear.

Three or four boarders coming in, who were unapprised of what had happened, at length revived the conversation; not, however, until they had created some confusion by inquiring of their friends the cause of their sober looks. As soon as the conversation began to become easy and natural Ned rose and walked out into the entry. With the first movement all were as hushed as death, but when he had cleared the door another Babel scene ensued. Some inquired, others suspected, and all wondered. Some were engaged in telling the strangers what had happened, others were making towards the bar, and all were becoming clamorous, when Ned returned and took his seat. His re-entry was as fatal to conversation as was the first movement of his exit; but it soon recovered from the shock, with the difference, however, that those who *led* before were now mute, and wholly absorbed in the contemplation of Ned's person.

After retaining his seat for about ten minutes, Ned rose again, inquired the way to the stable, and left the house. As soon as he passed the outer door, the barkeeper hastened to the company with Ned's paper in his hand. "Gentlemen," said he, "can any of you tell me what name this is?" All rushed to the paper in an instant; one or two pairs of heads met over it with considerable force. After pondering over it to their heart's content, they all agreed that the first letter was an "E," and the second a "B" or an "R," and the d—l himself could not make out the balance. While they were thus engaged, to the astonishment of everybody, Ned interrupted their deliberations with, "Gentlemen, if you have satisfied yourselves with that paper, I'll thank you for it." It is easy to imagine, but impossible to describe, the looks and actions of the company under their surprise and mortification. They dropped off, and left the barkeeper to his appropriate duty of handing the paper to Ned. He reached it forth, but Ned moved not a hand to receive it for about the space of three seconds, during which time he kept his eyes fixed upon the arch-offender in awfully solemn rebuke. He then took it gravely and put it in his pocket, and left the barkeeper with a shaking ague upon him. From this moment he became Ned's most obsequious and willing slave.

Supper was announced; Mrs. Blank, the landlady, took the head of the

table and Ned seated himself next to her. Her looks denoted some alarm at finding him so near to her, and plainly showed that he had been fully described to her by her husband or some one else.

"Will you take tea or coffee, sir?" said she.

"Why, madam," said Ned, in a tone as courteous as Chesterfield himself could have used, "I am really ashamed to acknowledge and to expose my very singular appetite; but habitual indulgence of it has made it necessary to my comfort, if not to my health, that I should still favor it when I can. If you will pardon me, I will take both at the same time."

This respectful reply (which, by-the-way, she alone was permitted to hear) had its natural effect. It won for him her unqualified indulgence, raised doubts whether he could be the suspicious character which had been described to her, and begat in her a desire to cultivate a further acquaintance with him. She handed to him the two cups, and accompanied them with some remarks, drawn from her own observation in the line of her business, calculated to reconcile him to his whimsical appetite; but she could extract from Ned nothing but monosyllables, and sometimes not even that much. Consequently, the good lady began very soon to relapse into her former feelings.

Ned placed a cup on either side of him, and commenced stirring both at the same time very deliberately. This done, he sipped a little tea, and asked Mrs. B. for a drop more milk in it. Then he tasted his coffee, and desired a little more sugar in it. Then he tasted his tea again, and requested a small lump more sugar in it. Lastly, he tasted his coffee, and desired a few drops more milk in that. It was easy to discover that, before he got suited, the landlady had solemnly resolved never to offer any more encouragement to such an appetite. She waxed exceedingly petulant, and, having nothing else to scold, she scolded the servants, of course.

Waffles were handed to Ned, and he took one; batter-cakes were handed, and he took one; and so on of muffins, rolls, and corn-bread. Having laid in these provisions, he turned into his plate, upon his waffle and batter-cake, some of the crumbs of the several kinds of bread which he had taken, in different proportions, and commenced mashing all together with his knife. During this operation the landlady frowned and pouted, the servants giggled, and the boarders were variously affected.

Having reduced his mess to the consistency of a hard poultice, he packed it all up to one side of his plate in the form of a terrapin, and smoothed it all over nicely with his knife. Nearly opposite to Ned, but a little below him, sat a waspish little gentleman, who had been watching him with increasing torments from the first to the last movement of Ned's knife. His tortures were visible to blinder eyes than Ned's, and, doubtless, had been seen by him in their earliest paroxysms. This gentleman occupied a seat nearest to a dish of steak, and was in the act of muttering something about "brutes" to his next neighbor, when Ned beckoned a servant to him, and requested him "to ask that gentleman for a small bit of steak." The servant obeyed, and, planting Ned's plate directly between the gentleman's and the steak-dish, delivered his message. The testy gentleman turned his head, and the first thing he saw was Ned's parti-colored terrapin right under his nose. He started as if he had been struck by a snapping-turtle, reddened to scarlet, looked at Ned (who appeared as innocent as a lamb), looked at the servant (who appeared as innocent as Ned), and then fell to work on the steak as if he were amputating all Ned's limbs at once.

Ned now commenced his repast. He ate his meat and *breads* in the usual way, but he drank his liquids in all ways. First a sip of tea, then of coffee; then two of the first and one of the last; then three of the last and one of the first, and so on.

His steak was soon consumed, and his plate was a second time returned to the mettlesome gentleman "for another *very* small bit of steak." The plate paid its second visit precisely as it had its first; and as soon as the fiery gentleman saw the half-demolished terrapin again under his nose he seized a fork, drove it into the largest slice of steak in the dish, dashed it into Ned's plate, rose from the table, and left the room, cursing Ned from the inmost chamber of his soul. Every person at the table, except Ned, laughed outright at the little man's fury; but Ned did not even smile; nay, he looked for all the world as if he thought the laugh was at him.

The boarders one after another retired, until Ned and the landlady were left alone at the table.

"Will you have another cup of tea and coffee, sir?" said she, by the way

of convincing him that he ought to retire, seeing that he had finished his supper.

"No, I thank you, madam," returned Ned.

"Will you have a glass of milk, and a cup of tea or coffee, or all three together?"

"No, ma'am," said Ned. "I am not blind, madam," continued he, "to the effects which my unfortunate eccentricities have produced upon yourself and your company; nor have I witnessed them without those feelings which they are well calculated to inspire in a man of ordinary sensibilities. I am aware, too, that I am prolonging and aggravating your uneasiness in detaining you beyond the hour which demands your presence at the table; but I could not permit you to retire without again bespeaking your indulgence of the strange, unnatural appetite which has just caused you so much astonishment and mortification. The story of its beginning might be interesting, and certainly would be instructive to you if you are a mother; but I am indisposed at this time to obtrude it upon your patience, and I presume you are still less disposed to hear it. My principal object, however, in claiming your attention for a moment at this time is to assure you that, out of respect to your feelings, I will surrender the enjoyment of my meals for the few days that I have to remain in Savannah, and conform to the customs of your table. The sudden change of my habits will expose me to some inconvenience, and may, perhaps, affect my health; but I will willingly incur these hazards rather than renew your mortification, or impose upon your family the trouble of giving me my meals at my room."

The good lady, whose bitter feelings had given place to the kinder emotion of pity and benevolence before Ned had half concluded his apology (for it was delivered in a tone of the most melting eloquence), caught at this last hint, and insisted upon sending his meals to his room. Ned reluctantly consented, after extorting a pledge from her that *she* would assume the responsibilities of the trouble that he was about to give the family.

"As to your *boarders,* madam," said Ned, in conclusion, "I have no apology to make to them. I grant them the privilege of eating what they

please and as they please; and, so far as they are concerned, I shall exercise the same privileges, reckless of their feelings or opinions; and I shall take it as a singular favor if you will say nothing to them or to any one else which may lead them to the discovery that I am acquainted with my own peculiarities."

The good lady promised obedience to his wishes, and Ned, requesting to be conducted to his room, retired.

A group of gentlemen at the fireplace had sent many significant "hems" and smiles to Mrs. Blank during her *tête-à-tête* with Ned; and as she approached them, on her way out of the room, they began to taunt her playfully upon the impression which she seemed to have made upon the remarkable stranger.

"Really," said one, "I thought the *impression* was on the other side."

"And, in truth, so it was," said Mrs. B. At this moment her husband stepped in.

"I'll tell you what it is, Mr. Blank," said one of the company, "you'd better keep a sharp look-out on that stranger; our landlady is wonderfully taken with him."

"I'll be bound," said Mr. B., "for my wife; the less like anybody else in the world he is, the better will she like him."

"Well, I assure you," said Mrs. B., "I have never had my feelings so deeply interested in a stranger in my life. I'd give the world to know his history."

"Why, then," rejoined the landlord, "I suppose he has been quizzing us all this time."

"No," said she, "he is incapable of quizzing. All that you have seen of him is unaffected, and perfectly natural to him."

"Then, really," continued the husband, "he is a very interesting object, and I congratulate you upon getting so early into his confidence; but, as I am not quite as much captivated with his unaffected graces as you seem to be, I shall take the liberty, in charity to the rest of my boarders, of requesting him to-morrow to seek other lodgings."

"Oh," exclaimed Mrs. B., in the goodness of her heart, and with a countenance evincive of the deepest feeling, "I would not have you do such a thing for the world. He's only going to stay a few days."

"How do you know?"

"He told me so, and do let's bear with him that short time. He sha'n't trouble you or the boarders any more."

"Why, Sarah," said the landlord, "I do believe you are out of your senses!"

"Gone case!" said one boarder. "Terrible affair!" said another. "Bewitching *little* fellow," said a third. "Come, Mrs. Blank, tell us all he said to you! We young men wish to know how to please the ladies, so that we may get wives easily. I'm determined, the next party I go to, to make a soup of everything on the waiters and eat all at once. I shall then become irresistible to the ladies."

"Get along with your nonsense," said Mrs. B., smiling, as she left the room.

At eight o'clock I retired to my room, which happened (probably from the circumstance of our reaching the hotel within a few minutes of each other) to be adjoining Ned's. I had no sooner entered my room than Ned followed me, where we interchanged the particulars which make up the foregoing story. He now expended freely the laughter which he had been collecting during the evening. He stated that his last interview with Mrs. Blank was the result of necessity; that he found he had committed himself in making up and disposing of his odd supper, for that he should have to eat in the same way during his whole stay in Savannah unless he could manage to get his meals in private; and, though he was willing to do penance for one meal in order to purchase the amusement he had enjoyed, he had no idea of tormenting himself three or four days for the same purpose. "To tell you the honest truth," said he, "nothing but an appetite whetted by fasting and travelling could have borne me through the table scene. As it was, my stomach several times threatened to expose my tricks to the whole company, by down-right open rebellion. I feel that I must make it some atonement for the liberty I have taken with it, and therefore propose that we go out and take an oyster supper before we retire to rest." I assented. We set out, going separately until we reached the street.

We were received by the oyster-vender in a small shop which fronted upon the street, and were conducted through it to a back door, and thence, by a flight of steps, to a convenient room on the second floor of an adjoin-

ing building. We had been seated about three minutes when we heard footsteps on the stairs, and directly caught this sentence from the ascending stranger: "Aha, Monsieur Middletong! you say you hab de bes' oystar in la cittee! Vel, me shall soon see."

The sentence was hardly uttered before the door opened and in stepped a gay, smirky little Frenchman. He made us a low bow, and, as soon as he rose from his obeisance, Ned rushed to him in transports of joy, seized him by the hand, and, shaking it with friendship's warmest grasp, exclaimed, "How do you do, my old friend? I had no idea of meeting you here; how do you do, Mr. Squeezelfanter? how have you been this long time?"

"Sair," said the Frenchman, "me tank you ver' much to lub me so hard; but you mistake de gentleman; my name is not de Squeezilfaunter."

"Come, come, John," continued Ned, "quit your old tricks before strangers. Mr. Hall, let me introduce you to my particular friend, John Squeezelfanter, from Paris."

"Perhaps, sir," said I, not knowing well what to say or how to act in such an emergency—"perhaps you have mistaken the gentleman."

"Begar, sair," said monsieur, "he is mistake oberyting at once. My name if not *Zhaun;* me play no *treek;* me is not de gentlemong fren'; me did not come from *Paree,* but from Bordeaux; and me did not suppose dare was a man in all France dat was name de Squeezilfaunter."

"If I am mistaken," said Ned, "I humbly ask your pardon; but, really, you look so much like my old friend *Jack,* and talk so much like him, that I would have sworn you were he."

"Vel, sair," said monsieur, looking at Ned as though he might be an acquaintance after all, "vel, sair, dis time you tell my name right; my name is Jacques—*Jacques Sancric.*"

"There," proceeded Ned, "I knew it was impossible I could be mistaken; your whole family settled on *Sandy Creek;* I knew your father and mother, your sisters Patsy and Dilsy, your brother Ichabod, your aunt Bridget, your—"

"Oh, mon Dieu, mon Dieu!" exclaimed the Frenchman, no longer to contain his surprise; "dat is von 'Mericane familee. Dare vas not one French familee hab all dat name since dis vorl' was make."

"Now look at me, good Jack," said Ned, "and see if you don't recollect your old friend Obadiah Snoddleburg, who used to play with you, when a boy, in Sandy Creek."

"Vel, Monsieur Snotborg, me look at you ver' vell, and, begar, me neber see you in de creek, nor out de creek. 'Tis ver' surprise you not know one *name* from one *creek*."

"Oh, very well, sir, very well; I forgot where I was; I understand you now, perfectly. You are not the first gentleman I have met with in Savannah who knew me well in the country and forgot me in town. I ask your pardon, sir, and hope you'll excuse me."

"Me is ver' will' to know you *now,* sair; but, begar, me will not tell you one lie, to know you *twenty-five and tirty years ago.*"

"It makes no difference, sir," said Ned, looking thoughtful and chagrined. "I beg leave, however, before we close our acquaintance, to correct one mistake which I made. I said you were from Paris; I believe, on reflection, I was wrong; I think your sister Dilsy told me you *were* from Bordeaux."

"*Foutre* de sist' Dils! Here, Monsieur Middletong! My oystar ready?"

"Yes, sir."

"Vell, if my oystar ready, you give dem to my fren' Monsieur Snotborg; and ask him to be so good to carry dem to my sist' Dils, and my brodder Ichbod on Sand Creek." So saying, he vanished like lightning.

The next morning, at breakfast, I occupied Ned's seat. Mrs. Blank had no sooner taken her place than she ordered a servant to bring her a waiter, upon which she placed a cup of tea and another of coffee; then ordering three plates, she placed them on it; sent one servant for one kind of bread, and another for another, and so on through all the varieties that were on the table, from which she made selections for plate No. 1. In the same way did she collect meats for plate No. 2; No. 3 she left blank. She had nearly completed her operations, when her husband came to know why every servant was engaged and no gentlemen helped to anything, when the oddly furnished waiter met his eye and fully explained the wonder.

"In God's name, Sarah," said he, "who are you mixing up those messes for?"

"For that strange gentleman we were speaking of last night," was the reply.

"Why doesn't he come to the table?"

"He was very anxious to come, but I would not let him."

"*You* would not let him? Why not?"

"Because I did not wish to see a man of his delicate sensibilities ridiculed and insulted at my table."

"Delicate devilabilities! Then why didn't you send a *servant* to collect his mixtures?"

"Because I preferred doing it myself to troubling the boarders. I knew that, wherever his plates went, the gentlemen would be making merry over them, and I couldn't bear to see it."

The landlord looked at her for a moment with commingled astonishment, doubt, and alarm; and then, upon the breath of a deep-drawn sigh, proceeded:

"Well, d—n the man! He hasn't been in the house more than two hours, except when he was asleep, and he has insulted one half my boarders, made fools of the other half, turned the head of my barkeeper, crazed all my servants, and run my wife right stark, staring, raving mad; a man who is a perfect clown in his manners, and who, I have no doubt, will in the end prove to be a horse-thief."

Much occurred between the landlord and his lady in relation to Ned which we must, of necessity, omit. Suffice it to say that her assiduities to Ned, her unexplained sympathies for him, her often-repeated desires to become better acquainted with him, conspiring with one or two short interviews which her husband saw between her and Ned (and which consisted of nothing more than expressions of regret of his part of the trouble he was giving the family, and assurance on hers that it was no trouble at all), began to bring upon the landlord the husband's worst calamity. This she soon observed; and, considering her duty to her husband as of paramount obligation, she gave him an explanation that was entirely satisfactory. She told him that Ned was a man of refined feelings and highly cultivated mind, but that, in his infancy, his mother had forced him to eat different kinds of diet together, until she had produced in him a vitiated and unconquerable appetite, which he was now constrained to indulge, as

the drunkard does his, or be miserable. As the good man was prepared to believe any story of *woman's* folly, he was satisfied.

This being the Sabbath, at the usual hour Ned went to church, and selected for his morning service one of those churches in which the pews are free, and in which the hymn is given out, and sung by the congregation, a half recitative.

Ned entered the church in as fast a walk as he could possibly assume; then proceeded about half down the aisle, and popped himself down in his seat as quickly as if he had been shot. The more thoughtless of the congregation began to titter, and the graver peeped up slyly but solemnly at him.

The pastor rose, and, before giving out the hymn, observed that *singing* was a part of the service in which he thought the whole congregation ought to join. Thus saying, he gave out the first lines of the hymn. As soon as the tune was raised, Ned struck in with one of the loudest, hoarsest, and most discordant voices that ever annoyed a solemn assembly.

"I would observe," said the preacher, before giving out the next two lines, "that there are some persons who have not the gift of singing; such, of course, are not expected to sing." Ned took the hint and sang no more; but his entrance into church and his entrance into the hymn had already dispersed the solemnity of three-fifths of the congregation.

As soon as the pastor commenced his sermon, Ned opened his eyes, threw back his head, dropped his under-jaw, and surrendered himself to the most intense interest. The preacher was an indifferent one; and by as much as he became dull and insipid, by so much did Ned become absorbed in the discourse. And yet it was impossible for the nicest observer to detect anything in his looks or manner short of the most solemn devotion. The effect which his conduct had upon the congregation, and their subsequent remarks, must be left to the imagination of the reader. I give but one remark: "Bless that good man who came in the church so quick," said a venerable matron as she left the church door, "how he was affected by the *sarment!*"

Ned went to church no more on that day. About four o'clock in the afternoon, while he was standing at the tavern door, a funeral procession passed by, at the foot of which, and singly, walked one of the smallest

men I ever saw. As soon as he came opposite the door, Ned stepped out and joined him with great solemnity. The contrast between the two was ludicrously striking, and the little man's looks and uneasiness plainly showed that he felt it. However, he soon became reconciled to it. They proceeded but a little way before Ned inquired of his companion who was dead.

"Mr. Noah Bills," said the little man.

"Nan?" said Ned, raising his hand to his ear, in token of deafness, and bending his head to the speaker.

"Mr. Noah Bills," repeated the little man, loud enough to disturb the two couples immediately before him.

"Mrs. Noel's Bill!" said Ned, with mortification and astonishment. "Do the white persons pay such respect to niggers in Savannah? *I* sha'n't do it." So saying, he left the procession.

The little man was at first considerably nettled; but, upon being left to his own reflections, he got into an uncontrollable fit of laughter, as did the couple immediately in advance of him, who overheard Ned's remark. The procession now exhibited a most mortifying spectacle; the head of it in mourning and in tears, and the foot of it convulsed with laughter.

On Monday Ned employed himself in disposing of the business which brought him to Savannah, and I saw but little of him; but I could not step into the street without hearing of him. All talked about him, and hardly any two agreed about his character.

On Tuesday he visited the market, and set it all in astonishment or laughter. He wanted to buy something of everybody, and some of everything; but could not agree upon the terms of a trade, because he always wanted his articles in such portions and numbers as no one could sell, or upon conditions to which no one would submit. To give a single example: he beset an old negro woman to sell him the half of a living chicken.

"Do, my good mauma, sell it to me," said he; "my wife is very sick and is longing for chicken pie, and this is all the money I have" (holding out twelve and a half cents in silver), "and it's just what a half-chicken comes to at your own price."

"Ki, massa! how gwine cut live chicken in two?"

"I don't want you to cut it in two alive; kill it, clean it, and then divide it."

"Name o' God! what sort o' chance got to clean chicken in de market-house? Whay de water for scall um and wash um?"

"Don't scald it at all; just pick it, so."

"Ech-ech! Fedder fly all ober de buckeraman meat, he come bang me fo' true. No, massa; I mighty sorry for your wife, but I no cutty chicken open."

In the afternoon Ned entered the dining-room of the tavern, and who should he find there but Monsieur Sancric, of oyster-house memory. He and the tavern-keeper were alone. With the first glimpse of Ned, "Le diable!" exclaimed the Frenchman, "here my brodder Ichbod 'gain!" and away he went.

"Mr. Sancric!" said the landlord, calling to him as if to tell him something just thought of, and following him out, "what did you say that man's name is?"

"He name Monsieur Snotborg."

"Why, that can't be his name, for it begins with a B or an R. Where is he from?"

"From Sand Creek."

"Where did you know him?"

"Begar, me neber did know him." Here Ned sauntered in sight of the Frenchman, and he vanished.

"Well," said the landlord, as he returned, "it does seem to me that everybody who has anything to do with that man runs crazy forthwith."

When he entered the dining-room he found Ned deeply engaged reading a child's primer, with which he seemed wonderfully delighted. The landlord sat for a moment, smiled, and then hastily left the room. As soon as he disappeared, Ned laid down his book, and took his station behind some cloaks in the bar, which at the moment was deserted. He had just reached his place when the landlord returned with his lady.

"Oh," said the first, "he's gone! I brought you in to show you what kind of books your man of 'refined feelings and highly cultivated mind' delights in. But he has left his book, and here it is, opened at the place where he left off; and do let's see what's in it."

They examined, and found that he had been reading the interesting poem of "Little Jack Horner."

"Now," continued the landlord, "if you'll believe me, he was just as much delighted with that story as you or I would be with the best written number of the *Spectator*."

"Well, it's very strange," said Mrs. Blank; "I reckon he must be *flighty*, for no man could have made a more gentlemanly apology than he did to me for his peculiarities, and no one could have urged it more feelingly."

"One thing is very certain," said the husband; "if he be not flighty himself, he has a wonderful knack of making everybody else so. Sancric ran away from him just now as if he had seen the devil; called him by one name when he left the room, by another at the door, told me where he came from, and finally swore he did not know him at all."

Ned, having slipped softly from the bar into the entry during this interview, entered the dining-room as if from the street.

"I am happy," said he smiling, "to meet you together and alone, upon the eve of my departure from Savannah, that I may explain to you my singular conduct and ask forgiveness of it. I will do so if you will not expose my true character until I shall have left the city."

This they promised. "My name, then," continued he, "is Edward Brace, of Richmond County. Humor has been my besetting sin from my youth up. It has sunk me far below the station to which my native gifts entitled me. It has robbed me of the respect of all my acquaintances, and, what is much more to be regretted, the esteem of some of my best and most indulgent friends. All this I have long known; and I have a thousand times deplored, and as often resolved to conquer, my self-destroying propensity. But so deeply is it wrought into my very nature, so completely and indissolubly interwoven it is with every fibre and filament of my being, that I have found it impossible for me to subdue it. Being on my first visit to Savannah, unknowing and unknown, I could not forego the opportunity which it furnished of gratifying my ungovernable proclivity. All the extravagances which you have seen have been in subservience to it."

He then explained the cause of his troubling the kind lady before him to give him his meals at his room, and the strange conduct of Monsieur

Sancric, at which they both laughed heartily. He referred them to me for confirmation of what he had told them. Having gone thus far, continued he, "I must sustain my character until to-morrow, when I shall leave Savannah."

Having now two more to enjoy his humor with him and myself, he let himself loose that night among the boarders with all his strength, and never did I see two mortals laugh as did Mr. and Mrs. Blank.

Far as I have extended this sketch, I cannot close without exhibiting Ned in one new scene in which accident placed him before he left Savannah.

About two o'clock on the morning of our departure the town was alarmed by the cry of fire. Ned got up before me, and, taking one of my boots from the door and putting one of his in its place, he marched down to the front door with odd boots. On coming out and finding what had been done, I knew that Ned could not have left the house, for it was impossible for him to wear my boot. I was about descending the stairs when he called to me from the front door, and said the servant had mixed our boots, and that he had brought down one of mine. When I reached the front door I found Ned and Mr. and Mrs. Blank there; all the inmates of the house having left it, who designed to leave it, but Ned and myself. .

"Don't go and leave me, Hall," said he, holding my boot in his hand, and having his own on his leg.

"How can I leave you," said I, "unless you'll give me my boot?" This he did not seem to hear.

"Do run, gentlemen," said Mrs. Blank, greatly alarmed. "Mr. Brace, you've got Mr. Hall's boot; give it to him."

"In a minute, madam," said he, seeming to be beside himself. A second after, however, all was explained to me. He designed to have my company to the fire, and his own fun before he went.

A man came posting along in great alarm and crying "Fire!" loudly.

"Mister, mister," said Ned, jumping out of the house.

"Sir," said the man, stopping and puffing awfully.

"Have you seen Mr. Peleg Q. C. Stone along where you've been?" inquired Ned, with anxious solicitude.

"D—n Mr. Peleg Q. C. Stone!" said the stranger. "What chance have I of seeing anybody, hopping up at two o'clock in the morning, and the town a-fire!" and on he went.

Thus did he amuse himself with various questions and remarks to four or five passengers, until even Mrs. Blank forgot for a while that the town was in flames. The last object of his sport was a woman, who came along exclaiming, "Oh, it's Mr. Dalby's house! I'm sure it is Mr. Dalby's house!" Two gentlemen assured her that the fire was far beyond Mr. Dalby's house; but still she went on with her exclamations. When she had passed the door about ten steps, Ned permitted me to cover my frozen foot with my boot, and we moved on towards the fire. We soon overtook the woman just mentioned, who had become somewhat pacified. As Ned came alongside of her, without seeming to notice her he observed, "Poor Dalby, I see his house is gone."

"I said so," she screamed out; "I knew it!" and on she went, screaming ten times louder than before.

As soon as we reached the fire a gentleman in military dress rode up and ordered Ned into the line to hand buckets. Ned stepped in, and the first bucket that was handed to him he raised very deliberately to his mouth and began to drink. In a few seconds all on Ned's right were overburdened with buckets and calling loudly for relief, while those on his left were unemployed. Terrible were the cursing and clamor, and twenty voices at once ordered Ned out of the line. Ned stepped out, and along came the man on horseback and ordered him in again.

"Captain," said Ned, "I am so thirsty that I can do nothing until I get some water, and they will not let me drink in the line."

"Well," said the captain, "step in, and I'll see that you get a drink."

Ned stepped in again, and receiving the first bucket began to raise it to his lips very slowly, when some one hallooed to him to pass on the bucket, and he brought it down again and handed it on.

"Why didn't you drink?" said the captain.

"Why? Don't you see they won't let me?" said Ned.

"Don't mind what they say; drink, and then go on with your work."

Ned took the next bucket, and commenced raising it as before, when some one again ordered him to pass on the bucket.

"There," said Ned, turning to the captain, with the bucket half raised, "you hear that?"

"Why, blast your eyes," said the captain, "what do you stop for? Drink on and have done with it."

Ned raised the bucket to his lips and drank, or pretended to drink, until a horse might have been satisfied.

"Ain't you done?" said the captain, general mutiny and complaint beginning to prevail in the line.

"Why, ha'n't you drank enough?" said the captain, becoming extremely impatient.

"Most," said Ned, letting out a long breath and still holding the bucket near his lips.

"Zounds and blood!" cried the captain, "clear yourself; you'll drink an engineful of water!"

Ned left the ranks and went to his lodgings; and the rising sun found us on our way homeward.

HALL.

THE STEAMBOAT CAPTAIN
Who was
AVERSE TO RACING
"THE YOUNG 'UN," OF PHILADELPHIA

This steamboat story appeared originally in the Spirit of the Times, *N. Y., 1846 May 16. It was also included in the collection* The Big Bear of Arkansas. *The author was George P. Burnham.*

THE STEAMBOAT CAPTAIN
Who was
AVERSE TO RACING
"THE YOUNG 'UN"

EARLY IN the spring of the present year, a magnificent new steamer was launched upon the Ohio river, and shortly afterward made her appearance at the Levee, opposite the flourishing city of Cincinnati. Gilt-edged covers, enveloping the captain's "respects," accompanied with invitations to "see her through," upon her first trip down the river, were forwarded to the editorial corps in that vicinity; the chalked hats were "numerous" on the occasion. It was a grand affair, this *debut* of a floating palace, which has since maintained her repute untarnished as the "crack boat," *par excellence,* upon the Western waters. Your humble servant was among the "invited guests"—and a nice time he had of it!

I found myself on board this beautiful craft in "close communion" with a score of unquestionable "beauties." The company proved to be a heterogeneous conglomeration of character—made up of editors, lawyers, auctioneers, indescribables, and "fancies"—with a sprinkling of "nonesuch's." There was a stray parson, too, in the crowd—but as his leisure time "between meals" was spent in trading horses, we dispensed with his "grace before meals."

We left our moorings an hour before sunset, upon a clear cold afternoon, and passed rapidly down stream for a considerable distance, with-

out experiencing any out-of-the-way occurrence. The "sons of temperance," and the parson aforesaid, amused themselves over a smoking whisky toddy—the "boys" were relieving each other of their superfluous dimes and quarters at euchre, when a tall gentleman, who was "some," (when he was sober), stepped suddenly into the cabin, and imparted the information that a well-known "fast boat" had just hove in sight, at the mouth of the Kentucky river. The cards were "dropt" instanter—the punches disappeared—and the "mourners" were soon distributed in knots upon the promenade deck, to watch the progress of events.

Our "bully" boat sped away like a bird, however, and the craft behind gave us early evidence that she should offer no child's play. The "fat was in the fire" at once—a huge column of black smoke curled up in the clear atmosphere—*an extra turn or two* was visible upon our own boat, and away we went! A good deal of excitement existed among the party, as the rival steamer was clearly gaining upon us. A craft like ours, with such a company, and such a captain, mustn't be *beaten*.

As the boat behind us fell in under our stern, and we could "count her passengers," a sort of impression came over us, that, by some mistake, we had got upon the wrong boat! At least, such was the expressed opinion of the parson, as he threatened to "go down stairs" and take another drink. Our captain was a noble fellow—he paced the deck quietly, with a constant eye to wind'ard; but he said nothing. A bevy of the mourners stepped up to him, with—

"What speed, cap'n?"

"Fair, gentlemen; I may say very *fair*."

"Smart craft, that, behind," ventured one.

"Very," responded the captain, calmly, as he placed his hand upon a small brass knob at the back of the pilot house. This movement was responded to by the faint jingling of a bell below, followed immediately by a rush of cinders from the smoke-pipes, and an improved action of the paddles.

"Now we move again."

"Some," was the response, and a momentary tremor pervaded the boat as she "slid along" right smartly.

But the craft in our rear moved like our shadow on the calm waters, and as we shot down the river, it seemed as if we had her "in tow," so calmly and uniformly did she follow in our wake. The excitement of the congregation upon deck had by this time become intense, and it was pretty plain that the boats must shortly part company, or "split something!" The rascal behind us took advantage of a turn in the channel, and "helm a-starboard!" was clearly heard from the look-out of our rival, as she "hove off," and suddenly fell alongside us! The parson went below at once, to put his threat into execution, as we came up into the current again, "neck and neck"; and when he returned we were running a twenty-five-knot lick, the steam smack on to 49!

"She's going—goin' go—," muttered an auctioneer to himself.

"A perfect nonsuit," remarked a lawyer.

"Beaten, but not vanquished," added a politician; and away we scudded side by side for half an hour.

"Wouldn't she bear a *leetle* more?" meekly asked the parson.

"She's doing very well," replied the captain. "Don't get excited, gentlemen; my boat is a new one—her reputation and mine is at stake. We mustn't rush her—*racing always injures a boat,* and I am averse to it"; saying which he applied his thumb and finger to the brass knob again—the bell tinkled in the distance—and our rival pilot shortly had the opportunity to examine the architecture of our rudder-post!

I was acquainted with the engineer. I stepped below (believing we should be beaten at our present speed), and entering the engine-room—

"Tim," said I, "we'll be licked—give her another turn, eh?"

"I rayther think she moves some as it is," said Tim.

"Yes: but the C—— is hard on us—give her a little, my boy—just for—"

"Step in here a moment," remarked Tim; "it's all 'mum,' you know—nothin to be said, eh? Quiet—there!—don't she tremble some?"

I noticed, for the first time, that our boat did labour prodigiously!

"But come round *here,"* continued Tim; *"look there!—mum's* the word you know."

I stepped out of that engine-room (Tim said afterwards, that I "sprang out at one bound"; but he lied!) in a hurry. *The solder upon the connec-*

tion-pipe had melted and run down over the seams in a dozen places, from the excessive heat—a crow-bar was braced athwart the safety-value, with a "fifty-six" upon one end—and we were shooting down the Ohio, under a head of steam "chock up" to 54 40!!

My "sleeping apartment" was well aft. I entered the state-room—got over upon the back side of my berth—and, stuffing the corners of the pillow into my ears, endeavoured to compose myself in sleep. It was out of the question. In attempting to "right myself," I discovered that *my hair stuck out so straight, it was impossible for me to get my head within six inches of the pillow!*

I tossed about till daylight, in momentary expectation of being landed in Kentucky (or somewhere else!), but we got on finely. We led our rival half an hour into Louisville; and I immediately swore upon my nightcap that I would never accept another invitation, for a pleasure trip, from *a steamboat captain who was averse to racing!*

"OLD SENSE,"

of

ARKANSAS

"N. OF ARKANSAS"

From The Big Bear of Arkansas, *1845, edited by Wm. T. Porter, p. 143. The author was C. F. M. Noland.*

"OLD SENSE," of ARKANSAS

C. F. M. NOLAND

THE WRITER of the following anecdote was one of the most popular correspondents of the *Spirit of the Times*. His communications were frequently interlarded with outline portraits like the following:—

Sam Laughman.—"Who's Sam Laughman?" everybody will ask. Well, Sam is the Mayor of Uniontown, to which office he has been thrice elected by the suffrages of his constituents; and Uniontown is the prettiest town in all Mississippi—it can boast of the only specie-paying bank in the State—has a town-hall, church, many other public buildings, and a race track, with everything else denoting a Christianized community. But to Sam's story:—A chap walking out, came across "Old Mose," sitting in the broiling sun, fishing. "Well, Mose," said he, "what in the world are you doing thar?" "Fiffin!" (fishing). "What?" "Fiffin!" "Fishing—well, what's the reason you can't talk? what's in your mouth?" "Oh, nuffin but wums (worms) for bait!" I hallooed for old Izaak, when Sam opened his "wum" box.

But two of N's favourite "characters" are "Old Sense," and Dan Looney, of whom the reader may form an idea by the subjoined sketch.

The way the natives sometimes talk here is amusing. The following

dialogue lately occurred here on the Devil's Fork of the Little Red (River). Old Sense met Dan Looney; they were strangers to each other. Says "Old Sense,"

"Good morning, sir; are you well?"

"If you call a man 'well' that has run twenty miles, I am *that.*"

"Did you see any bear?"

"If you call a big black thing about the size of *Pete Whetsone's* black mar, a hoss, 'a *bar,*' I did."

"Had you a gun!"

"Now you hit me."

"Did you draw blood?"

"Do you call my double, double handsfull of brains, blood?"

"Had you a dog?"

"Is *Old Bose* a dog?"

"Did you skin him?"

"Well, if you call a man in his shirt sleeves, with a knife seventeen inches in the blade, among ribs and meat, *skinning,* I was *thar!*"

"Was he fat?"

"Do you call cutting eighteen inches on the ribs, *fat?*"

"Did you pack him in?"

"If you call four pony loads *packing,* why I packed *some!*"

"Light loads, I reckon."

"If *four hundred pounds* to a pony is a light load, they were light."

"Did you eat any of it?"

"Do you call drinking a *quart of bar's ile,* eating?"

"You must have meat."

"If you call *two thousand seven hundred pounds* of clean meat, without a bone, safe inside of a smoke-house, *meat,* we have got *some.*"

"They must be fat at your house?"

"Do you call a *candle* fat?"

Here Old Sense brought a perfect squeal, and swore he had found the very man he had been looking for.

P.S. They had closed a quarter race up to the last accounts.

With another sketch of an incident in the career of "Old Sense" and his partner, we take our leave of "N. of Arkansas."

Since I mentioned Old Sense, I'll tell you what has lately happened to him—he got a most dreadful flogging. He let his pony into young Shoulderstrap's old stud, and they had a fight, and the pony was about to lay it on to the old stud, when up slipped Shoulderstrap, and gathering a Maypole, had well nigh made a finish of poor Old Sense—who left these diggins on the strength of it. God knows where he is now—I don't. I saw his partner 'tother day. He is a great big tall fellow, about half Injun; they call him *Doctor,* but he don't practice any except in certain cases of necessity. Last summer he kept a stud for old Mealbag, and stood him part of his time at old Squire Chiney's. The horse made a pretty good stand, and, from all accounts, the doctor made another; at any rate, him and the old Squire had a monstrous falling out about the time the season expired; and had not the Squire given his better half an awful flogging, one would have been at a loss to know what the falling out was about; but since it is a fact that he did, "then and there, with malice aforethought, both expressed and implied," most wantonly and brutishly "pounced" his old wife, the natural supposition is, that her and Old Sense's partner had been too thick—perhaps as thick as "two in a bed." But that does not justify old Chiney in beating the poor old critter till the blood run, as he most certainly did, and sent her forth in the world to "shift for herself," almost without a "shift."

THE MILITIA
Company
DRILL

OLIVER H. PRINCE

From Georgia Scenes; *but this sketch was not written by Longstreet. It is now generally accredited to Oliver Hillhouse Prince, an intimate friend of Longstreet's. Poe thought the sketch, "very well executed. Among the innumerable descriptions of Militia musters which are so rife in the land, we have met with nothing at all equal to this in the matter of broad farce."* *Poe,* Southern Literary Messenger *March, 1836.*

THE MILITIA
Company
DRILL

OLIVER H. PRINCE

I HAPPENED, not long since, to be present at the muster of a captain's company in a remote part of one of the counties; and as no general description could convey an accurate idea of the achievements of that day, I must be permitted to go a little into detail, as well as my recollection will serve me.

The men had been notified to meet at nine o'clock, "armed and equipped as the law directs"; that is to say, with a gun and cartridge-box, at least, but, as directed by the law of the United States, "with a good fire-lock, a sufficient bayonet and belt, and a pouch with a box to contain no less than twenty-four sufficient cartridges of powder and ball."

At twelve, about one-third, perhaps one-half, of the men had collected, and an inspector's return of the number present, and of their arms, would have stood nearly thus: 1 captain; 1 lieutenant; ensign, none; fifers, none; privates present, 24; ditto absent, 40; guns, 14; gunlocks, 12; ram-rods, 10; rifle pouches, 3; bayonets, none; belts, none; spare flints, none; cartridges, none; horsewhips, walking-canes, and umbrellas, 10. A little before one, the captain, whom I shall distinguish by the name of Clodpole, gave directions for forming the line of parade. In obedience to this order, one of the sergeants, whose lungs had long supplied the place of a drum and

fife, placed himself in front of the house and began to bawl with great vehemence, "All Captain Clodpole's company parade here! Come, *gentlemen,* parade here!" says he; "all you that hasn't got guns, fall into the lower *eend.*" He might have bawled till this time with as little success as the sirens who sang to Ulysses, had he not changed his post to a neighboring shade. There he was immediately joined by all who were then at leisure; the others were at that time engaged as parties or spectators at a game of fives, and could not just then attend. However, in less than half an hour the game was finished, and the captain enabled to form his company and proceed in the duties of the day.

"Look to the right and dress!"

They were soon, by the help of the non-commissioned officers, placed in a straight line; but, as every man was anxious to see how the rest stood, those on the wings pressed forward for that purpose, till the whole line assumed nearly the form of a crescent.

"Why, look at 'em!" says the captain. "Why, gentlemen, you are all a-crooking in at both *eends,* so that you will get on to me by-and-by! Come, gentlemen, *dress, dress!*"

This was accordingly done; but, impelled by the same motives as before, they soon resumed their former figure, and so they were permitted to remain.

"Now, gentlemen," says the captain, "I'm going to carry you through the *revolutions* of the manual exercise; and I want you gentlemen, if you please, to pay particular attention to the word of command, just exactly as I give it out to you. I hope you will have a little patience, gentlemen, if you please; and if I should be ago-ing wrong, I will be much obliged to any of you, gentlemen, to put me right again; for I mean all for the best, and I hope you will excuse me, if you please. And one thing, gentlemen, I caution you against in particular, and that is this: not to make any *mistakes,* if you can possibly help it; and the best way to do this will be to do all the motions right at first; and that will help us to get along so much the faster; and *I* will try to have it over as soon as possible. Come, boys, come to a shoulder.

"Poise, foolk!

"Cock, foolk! Very handsomely done.

"Take, aim!

"Ram down ca'tridge! No! no! *Fire!* I recollect now that firing comes next after taking aim, according to Steuben; but with your permission, gentlemen, I'll *read* the words of command just exactly as they were printed in the book, and then I shall be sure to be right."

"Oh yes; read it, captain, read it!" exclaimed twenty voices at once; "that will save time."

" 'Tention the whole! Please to observe, gentlemen, that at the word 'fire!' you must fire; that is if any of your guns are *loaden'd,* you must not shoot in *yearnest,* but only make pretence like; and you, gentlemen, fellow-soldiers, who's armed with nothing but sticks, riding-switches, and corn-stalks, needn't go through the firings, but stand as you are, and keep yourselves to yourselves.

"Half cock, foolk! Very well done.

"S-h-e-t (spelling)—*shet, pan!* That too would have been handsomely done, if you hadn't handled ca'tridge instead of shetting pan; but I suppose you wasn't noticing. Now 'tention, one and all, gentleman, and do that motion again.

"Shet, pan! Very good, very well indeed; you did that motion equal to any old soldier; you improve astonishingly.

"Handle, ca'tridge! Pretty well, considering you done it wrong end forèmost, as if you took the ca'tridge out of your mouth, and bit off the twist with the ca'tridge-box.

"Draw, rammer! Those who have no rammers to their guns need not draw, but only make the motion; it will do just as well, and save a great deal of time.

"Return, rammer! Very well again. But that would have been done, I think, with greater expertness if you had performed the motion with a little more dexterity.

"S-h-o-u-l—shoulder, foolk! Very handsomely done indeed! Put your guns on the other shoulder, gentlemen.

"Order, foolk! Not quite so well, gentlemen; not quite altogether; but perhaps I did not speak loud enough for you to hear me all at once. Try once more, if you please. I hope you will be patient, gentlemen; we will soon be through.

"Order, foolk! Handsomely done, gentlemen! Very handsomely done! and all together, too, except that one-half of you were a *leetle* too soon, and the other half a *leetle* too late.

"In laying down your guns, gentlemen, take care to lay the locks up and the other side down.

" 'Tention the whole! Ground, foolk! Very well.

"Charge, bayonet!"

(*Some of the men*)—"That can't be, captain; pray, look again; for how can we charge bayonet without our guns?"

(*Captain*)—"I don't know as to that, but I know I'm right, for here 'tis printed in the book; c-h-a-r- —yes, *charge, bayonet,* that's right, that's the word, if I know how to read. Come, gentlemen, do pray charge bayonet! Charge, I say! Why don't you charge? Do you think it ain't so? Do you think I have lived to this time o'day and don't know what charge bayonet is? Here, come here, you may see for yourselves; it's as plain as the nose on your fa—stop—stay—no—halt! no! Faith, I'm wrong! I turned over two leaves at once. I beg your pardon, we will not stay out long; and we'll have something to drink as soon as we have done. Come, boys, get off the stumps and logs, and take up your guns; we'll soon be done; excuse me, if you please.

"Fix, bayonet!

"Advance, arms! Very well done; turn the stocks of your guns in front, gentlemen, and that will bring the barrels behind; hold them straight up and down, if you please; let go with your left, and take hold with your right hand below the guard. Steuben says the gun should be held p-e-r—*pertic'lar;* yes, you must always mind and hold your guns very pertic'lar. Now, boys, 'tention the whole!

"Present, arms! Very handsomely done! only hold your gun over t'other knee—t'other hand up—turn your hands round a little, and raise them up higher—draw t'other foot back—now you are nearly right—very well done.

"Gentlemen, we come now to the *revolutions.* Men, you have all got into a sort of snarl, as I may say; how did you all get into such a higglety-pigglety?"

The fact was, the shade had moved considerably to the eastward, and

had exposed the right wing of these hardy veterans to a galling fire of the sun. Being poorly provided with umbrellas at this end of the line, they found it convenient to follow the shade; and in huddling to the left for this purpose they changed the figure of their line from that of a crescent to one which more nearly resembled a pair of pothooks.

"Come, gentlemen," says the captain, "spread yourselves out again into a straight line, and let us get into the wheelings and other matters as soon as possible."

But this was strenuously opposed by the soldiers. They objected to going into the *revolutions* at all, inasmuch as the weather was extremely hot, and they had already been kept in the field upward of three-quarters of an hour. They reminded the captain of his repeated promise to be as short as he possibly could, and it was clear he could dispense with all this wheeling and flourishing if he chose. They were already very thirsty, and if he would not dismiss them they declared they would go off without dismission and get something to drink, and he might fine them, if that would do him any good; they were able to pay their fine, but would not go without drink to please anybody; and they swore they would never vote for another captain who wished to be so unreasonably strict.

The captain behaved with great spirit upon the occasion, and a smart colloquy ensued; when at length, becoming exasperated to the last degree, he roundly asserted that no soldier ought ever to *think hard* of the orders of his officer; and, finally, he went so far as to say that he did not think any gentleman on that ground had any just cause to be offended with him. The dispute was finally settled by the captain sending for some grog for their present accommodation, and agreeing to omit reading the military law, and the performance of all the manoevres, except two or three such easy and simple ones as could be performed within the compass of the shade. After they had drunk their grog and had "spread themselves," they were divided into platoons.

" 'Tention the whole! To the right wheel!"

Each man faced to the right about.

"Why, gentlemen, I did not mean for every man to stand still and turn himself *nat*'rally right round; but when I told you to wheel to the right, I intended you to wheel round to the right, as it were. Please to try again,

gentlemen; every right-hand man must stand fast, and only the others turn round."

In the previous part of the exercises it had, for the purpose of sizing, been necessary to denominate every second person a "right-hand man." A very natural consequence was that, on the present occasion, these right-hand men maintained their position, all the intermediate ones facing about as before.

"Why, look at 'em, now!" exclaimed the captain, in extreme vexation; "I'll be d—d if you understand a word I say! Excuse me, gentlemen, it *rayly* seems as if you could not come at it exactly. In wheeling to the right, the right-hand *eend* of the platoon stands fast, and the other *eend* comes round like a swingle-tree. Those on the outside must march faster than those on the inside. You certainly must understand me now, gentlemen; and please to try it once more."

In this they were a little more successful.

" 'Tention the whole! To the left—left, no—right—that is, the left—I mean the right—left, wheel, march!"

In this he was strictly obeyed; some wheeling to the right, some to the left, and some to the right-left, or both ways.

"Stop! Halt! Let us try it again! I could not just then tell my right-hand from my left! You must excuse me, if you please; experience makes perfect, as the saying is. Long as I have served, I find something new to learn every day; but all's one for that. Now, gentlemen, do that motion once more."

By the help of a non-commissioned officer in front of each platoon, they wheeled this time with considerable regularity.

"Now, boys, you must try to wheel by divisions; and there is one thing in particular which I have to request of you, gentlemen, and that is, not to make any blunder in your wheeling. You must mind and keep at a wheeling distance, and not talk in the ranks, nor get out of fix again; for I want you to do this motion well, and not to make any blunder now.

" 'Tention the whole! By divisions, to the right wheel, march!"

In doing this it seemed as if Bedlam had broken loose: every man took the command. Not so fast on the right! Slow now! Haul down those umbrellas! Faster on the left! Keep back a little there! Don't *scrouge* so!

Hold up your gun, Sam! Go faster there! faster! Who trod on my—? D—n your huffs! Keep back! Stop us, captain, do stop us! Go faster, there! I've lost my shoe! Get up again, Ned! Halt! halt! halt! Stop, gentlemen! stop! stop!

By this time they had got into utter and inextricable confusion, and so I left them.

Timothy Crabshaw.

MAJOR JONES

Pops

THE QUESTION

WILLIAM T. THOMPSON

From Major Jones's Courtship *by*
W. T. Thompson.

MAJOR JONES

Pops

THE QUESTION

WILLIAM T. THOMPSON

Crismus is over, and the thing is done did! You know I told you in my last letter I was gwine to bring Miss Mary up to the chalk on Crismus. Well, I done it, slick as a whistle, though it come mighty nigh bein a serious bisness. But I'll tell you all about the whole circumstance.

The fact is, I's made my mind up more'n twenty times to jest go and come right out with the whole bisness; but whenever I got whar she was, and whenever she looked at me with her witchin eyes, and kind o' blushed at me, I always felt sort o' skeered and fainty, and all what I made up to tell her was forgot, so I couldn't think of it to save me. But you's a married man, Mr. Thompson, so I couldn't tell you nothin about poppin the question, as they call it. It's a mighty grate favour to ax of a pretty gall, and to people what aint used to it, it goes monstrous hard, don't it? They say widders don't mind it no more'n nothin. But I'm makin a transgression, as the preacher ses.

Crismus eve I put on my new suit, and shaved my face as slick as a smoothin iron, and after tea went over to old Miss Stallinses. As soon as I went into the parler whar they was all settin round the fire, Miss Carline and Miss Kesiah both laughed right out.

"There! there!" ses they, "I told you so! I know'd it would be Joseph."

"What's I done, Miss Carline?" ses I.

"You come under little sister's chicken bone, and I do believe she know'd you was comin when she put it over the dore."

"No I didn't—I didn't no such thing, now," ses Miss Mary, and her face blushed red all over.

"Oh, you needn't deny it," ses Miss Kesiah, "you belong to Joseph now, jest as sure as ther's any charm in chicken bones."

I know'd that was a first rate chance to say something, but the dear little creeter looked so sorry and kep blushin so, I couldn't say nothin zactly to the pint! so I tuck a chair and reached up and tuck down the bone and put it in my pocket.

"What are you gwine to do with that old chicken bone now, Majer?" ses Miss Mary.

"I'm gwine to keep it as long as I live," ses I, "as a Crismus present from the handsomest gall in Georgia."

When I sed that, she blushed worse and worse.

"Aint you shamed, Majer?" ses she.

"Now you ought to give *her* a Crismus gift, Joseph, to keep all *her* life," sed Miss Carline.

"Ah," ses old Miss Stallins, "when I was a gall we used to hang up our stockins—"

"Why, mother!" ses all of 'em, "to say stockins right before—"

Then I felt a little streaked too, cause they was all blushin as hard as they could.

"Highty-tity!" ses the old lady—"what monstrous 'finement to be shore! I'd like to know what harm ther is in stockins. People now-a-days is gitting so mealy-mouthed they can't call nothing by its right name, and I don't see as they's any better than the old time people was. When I was a gall like you, child, I used to hang up my stockins and git 'em full of presents."

The galls kep laughin and blushin.

"Never mind," ses Miss Mary, "Majer's got to give me a Crismus gift —won't you, Majer?"

"Oh, yes," ses I, "you know I promised you one."

"But I didn't mean *that,*" ses she.

"I've got one for you, what I want you to keep all your life, but it would take a two bushel bag to hold it," ses I.

"Oh, that's the kind," ses she.

"But will you promise to keep it as long as you live?" ses I.

"Certainly I will, Majer."

—"Monstrous 'finement now-a-days—old people don't know nothin about perlitness," said old Miss Stallins, jest gwine to sleep with her nittin in her lap.

"Now you hear that, Miss Carline," ses I. "She ses she'll keep it all her life."

"Yes, I will," ses Mary—"but what is it?"

"Never mind," ses I, "you hang up a bag big enough to hold it and you'll find out what it is, when you see it in the mornin."

Miss Carline winked at Miss Kesiah, and then whispered to her—then they both laughed and looked at me as mischievous as they could. They 'spicioned something.

"You'll be shore to give it to me now, if I hang up a bag," ses Miss Mary.

"And promise to keep it," ses I.

"Well, I will, cause I know that you wouldn't give me nothing that wasn't worth keepin."

They all agreed they would hang up a bag for me to put Miss Mary's Crismus present in, on the back porch, and about ten o'clock I told 'em good evenin and went home.

I sot up till mid-night, and when they was all gone to bed I went softly into the back gate, and went up to the porch, and thar, shore enough, was a great big meal-bag hangin to the jice. It was monstrous unhandy to git to it, and I was termined not to back out. So I sot some chairs on top of a bench and got hold of the rope and let myself down into the bag; but jest as I was gittin in, it swung agin the chairs, and down they went with a terrible racket; but nobody didn't wake up but Miss Stallinses old cur dog, and here he come rippin and tearin through the yard like rath, and round and round he went tryin to find what was the matter. I scrooch'd down in the bag and didn't breathe louder nor

a kitten, for fear he'd find me out, and after a while he quit barkin.

The wind begun to blow bominable cold, and the old bag kep turnin round and swingin so it made me sea-sick as the mischief. I was afraid to move for fear the rope would break and let me fall, and thar I sot with my teeth rattlin like I had a ager. It seemed like it would never come daylight, and I do believe if I didn't love Miss Mary so powerful I would froze to death; for my heart was the only spot that felt warm, and it didn't beat more'n two licks a minit, only when I thought how she would be supprised in the mornin, and then it went in a canter. Bimeby the cussed old dog come up on the porch and begun to smell about the bag, and then he barked like he thought he'd treed something. "Bow! wow! wow!" ses he. Then he'd smell agin, and try to git up to the bag. "Git out!" ses I, very low, for fear the galls mought hear me. "Bow! wow!" ses he. "Be gone! you bominable fool," ses I, and I felt all over in spots, for I spected every minit he'd nip me, and what made it worse, I didn't know whar abouts he'd take hold. "Bow! wow! wow!" Then I tried coaxin—"Come here, good fellow," ses I, and whistled a little to him, but it wasn't no use. Thar he stood and kep up his everlastin whinin and barkin, all night. I couldn't tell when daylight was breakin, only by the chickens crowin, and I was monstrous glad to hear 'em, for if I'd had to stay thar one hour more, I don't believe I'd ever got out of that bag alive.

Old Miss Stallins come out fust, and as soon as she seed the bag, ses she,

"What upon yeath has Joseph went and put in that bag for Mary? I'll lay its a yearlin or some live animal, or Bruin wouldn't bark at it so."

She went in to call the galls, and I sot thar, shiverin all over so I couldn't hardly speak if I tried to—but I didn't say nothin. Bimeby they all come runnin out on the porch.

"My goodness! what is it?" ses Miss Mary.

"Oh, it's alive!" ses Miss Kesiah, "I seed it move."

"Call Cato, and make him cut the rope," ses Miss Carline, "and lets see what it is. Come here, Cato, and git this bag down."

"Don't hurt it for the world," ses Miss Mary.

Cato untied the rope that was round the jice, and let the bag down easy on the floor, and I tumbled out all covered with corn meal, from head to foot.

"Goodness gracious!" ses Miss Mary, "if it aint the Majer himself!"

"Yes," ses I, "and you know you promised to keep my Crismus present as long as you lived."

The galls laughed themselves almost to death, and went to brushin off the meal as fast as they could, sayin they was gwine to hang that bag up every Crismus till they got husbands too. Miss Mary—bless her bright eyes—she blushed as beautiful as a morning-glory, and sed she'd stick to her word. She was right out of bed, and her hair wasn't komed, and her dress wasn't fix'd at all, but the way she looked pretty was real distractin. I do believe if I was froze stiff, one look at her sweet face, as she stood thar lookin down to the floor with her roguish eyes, and her bright curls falling all over her snowy neck, would have fotched me too. I tell you what, it was worth hanging in a meal bag from one Crismus to another to feel as happy as I have ever sense.

I went home after we had the laugh out, and sot by the fire till I got thawed. In the forenoon all the Stallinses come over to our house and we had one of the greatest Crismus dinners that ever was seed in Georgia, and I don't believe a happier company ever sot down to the same table. Old Miss Stallins and mother settled the match, and talked over every thing that ever happened in ther families, and laughed at me and Mary, and cried about ther dead husbands, cause they wasn't alive to see ther children married.

It's all settled now, 'cept we haint sot the weddin day. I'd like to have it all over at once, but young galls always like to be engaged a while, you know, so I spose I must wait a month or so. Mary (she ses I mustn't call her Miss Mary now) has been a good deal of trouble and botheration to me; but if you could see her you wouldn't think I ought to grudge a little sufferin to git sich a sweet little wife.

You must come to the weddin if you possibly kin, I'll let you know when. No more from

Your friend, till death, Jos. Jones.

N. B. I like to forgot to tell you about cousin Pete. He got snapt on egnog when he heard of my ingagement, and he's been as meller as hoss-apple ever sense.

MRS. YARDLEY'S QUILTING

GEORGE W. HARRIS

From Sut Lovingood's Yarns, *by G. W. Harris. See Introduction.*

MRS. YARDLEY'S QUILTING

GEORGE W. HARRIS

THAR'S ONE durn'd nasty muddy job, an' I is jis' glad enuf tu take a ho'n ur two, on the straingth ove hit."

"What have you been doing, Sut?"

"Helpin tu salt ole Missis Yardley down."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Fixin her fur rotten cumfurtably, kiverin her up wif sile, tu keep the buzzards frum cheatin the wurms."

"Oh, you have been helping to bury a woman."

"That's hit, by golly! Now why the devil can't I 'splain mysef like yu? I ladles out my words at randum, like a calf kickin at yaller-jackids; yu jis' rolls em out tu the pint, like a feller a-layin bricks—every one fits. How is it that bricks fits so clost enyhow? Rocks won't ni du hit."

"Becaze they'se all ove a size," ventured a man with a wen over his eye.

"The devil yu say, hon'ey-head! haint reapin-mersheens ove a size? I'd like tu see two ove em fit clost. You wait ontil yu sprouts tuther ho'n, afore yu venters tu 'splain mix'd questions. George, did yu know ole Missis Yardley?"

"No."

"Well, she wer a curious 'oman in her way, an' she wore shiney specks. Now jis' listen: Whenever yu see a ole 'oman ahine a par ove *shiney* specks, yu keep yer eye skinn'd; they am dang'rus in the extreme. Thar is jis' no knowin what they ken du. I hed one a-stradil ove me onst, fur kissin her gal. She went fur my har, an' she went fur my skin, ontil I tho't she ment tu kill me, an' wud a-dun hit, ef my hollerin hadent fotch ole Dave Jordan, a *bacheler,* tu my aid. He, like a durn'd fool, cotch her by the laig, an' drug her back'ards ofen me. She jis' kivered him, an' I run, by golly! The nex time I seed him he wer bald headed, an' his face looked like he'd been a-fitin wild-cats.

"Ole Missis Yardley wer a great noticer ove littil things, that nobody else ever seed. She'd say right in the middil ove sumbody's serious talk: 'Law sakes! thar goes that yaller slut ove a hen, a-flingin straws over her shoulder; she' arter settin now, an' haint laid but seven aigs. I'll disapint *her,* see ef I don't; I'll put a punkin in her nes', an' a feather in her nose. An' bless my soul! jis' look at that cow wif the wilted ho'n, a-flingin up dirt an' a-smellin the place whar hit cum frum, wif the rale ginuine still-wurim twis' in her tail, too; what upon the face ove the yeath kin she be arter now, the ole fool? watch her, Sally. An' sakes alive! jis' look at that ole sow; she's a-gwine in a fas' trot, wif her empty bag a-floppin agin her sides. Thar, she hes stop't, an's a-listenin! she's arter no good, sich kerryin on means no good.'

"An' so she wud gabble, no odds who wer a-listenin. She looked like she mout been made at fust 'bout four foot long, an' the common thickness ove wimen when they's at tharsefs, an' then had her har tied tu a stump, a par ove steers hitched to her heels, an' then straiched out a-mos' two foot more—mos' ove the straichin cumin outen her laigs an' naik. Her stockins, a-hangin on the clothes-line tu dry, looked like a par ove sabre scabbards, an' her naik looked like a dry beef shank smoked, an' mout been ni ontu es tough. I never felt hit mysef, I didn't, I jis' jedges by looks. Her darter Sal wer bilt at fust 'bout the laingth ove her mam, but wer never straiched eny by a par ove steers, an' she wer fat enuf tu kill; she wer taller lyin down than she wer a-standin up. Hit wer her who gin me the 'hump shoulder.' Jis' look at me; haint I'se got a tech ove the dromedary back thar bad? haint I humpy? Well, a-stoopin tu kill that

squatty lar-stan ove a gal is what dun hit tu me. She wer the fairest-lookin gal I ever seed. She allers wore thick woolin stockins 'bout six inches too long fur her laig; they rolled down over her garders, lookin like a par ove life presarvers up thar. I tell yu she wer a tarin gal enyhow. Luved kissin, wrastlin, an' biled cabbige, an' hated tite clothes, hot weather, an' suckit-riders. B'leved strong in married folk's ways, cradles, an' the remishun ove sins, an' didn't b'leve in corsets, fleas, peaners, nur the fashun plates.

"What caused the death of Mrs. Yardley, Sut?"

"Nuffin, only her heart stop't beatin 'bout losing a nine dimunt quilt. True, she got a skeer'd hoss tu run over her, but she'd a-got over that ef a quilt hadn't been mix'd up in the catastrophy. Yu see quilts wer wun ove her speshul gifts; she run strong on the bed-kiver question. Irish chain, star ove Texas, sun-flower, nine dimunt, saw teeth, checker board, an' shell quilts; blue, an' white, an' yaller an' black coverlids; an' callicker-cumfurts reigned triumphan' 'bout her hous'. They wer packed in drawers, layin in shelfs full, wer hung four dubbil on lines in the lof, packed in chists, piled on cheers, an' wer everywhar, even ontu the beds, an' wer changed every bed-makin. She told everybody she cud git tu listen tu hit that she ment tu give every durn'd one ove them tu Sal when she got married. Oh, lordy! what es fat a gal es Sal Yardley cud ever du wif half ove em, an' sleeping wif a husbun at that, is more nor I ever cud see through. Jis' think ove her onder twenty layer ove quilts in July, an' yu in thar too. Gewhillikins! George, look how I is sweatin' now, an' this is December. I'd 'bout es lief be shet up in a steam biler wif a three hundred pound bag ove lard, es to make a bisiness ove sleepin wif that gal—'twould kill a glass-blower.

"Well, tu cum tu the serious part ove this conversashun, that is how the old quilt-mersheen an' coverlidloom cum tu stop operashuns on this yeath. She hed narrated hit thru the neighborhood that nex Saterday she'd gin a quiltin—three quilts an' one cumfurt tu tie. 'Goblers, fiddils, gals, an' whisky,' wer the words she sent tu the men-folk, an' more tetchin ur wakenin words never drap't ofen an 'oman's tongue. She sed tu the gals, 'Sweet toddy, huggin, dancin, an' huggers in 'bundance.' Them words struck the gals rite in the pit ove the stumick, an' spread a ticklin

sensashun bof ways, ontil they scratched thar heads wif one han, an' thar heels wif tuther.

"Everybody, he an' she, what wer baptized b'levers in the righteousnes ove quiltins wer thar, an' hit jis' so happen'd that everybody in them parts, frum fifteen summers tu fifty winters, wer unannamus b'levers. Strange, warn't hit? Hit wer the bigges' quiltin ever Missis Yardley hilt, an' she hed hilt hundreds; everybody wer thar, 'scept the constibil an' suckit-rider, two dam easily-spared pussons; the numbers ni ontu even too; jis' a few more boys nur gals; that made hit more exhitin, fur hit gin the gals a chance tu kick an' squeal a littil, wifout runnin eny risk ove not gittin kissed at all, an' hit gin reasonabil grouns fur a few scrimmages amung the he's. Now es kissin an' fitin am the pepper an' salt ove all soshul getherins, so hit wer more espishully wif this ove ours. Es I swung my eyes over the crowd, George, I thought quiltins, managed in a morril an' sensibil way, truly am good things—good fur free drinkin, good fur free eatin, good fur free huggin, good fur free dancin, good fur free fitin, an' goodest ove all fur poperlatin a country fas'.

"Thar am a fur-seein wisdum in quiltins, ef they has proper trimmins: 'vittils, an' sperrits in 'bundance.' One holesum quiltin am wuf three old pray'rmeetins on the poperlashun pint, purtickerly ef hits hilt in the dark ove the moon, an' runs intu the night a few hours, an' April ur May am the time chosen. The moon don't suit quiltins whar everybody is well acquainted an' already fur along in courtin. She dus help pow'ful tu begin a courtin match onder, but when hit draws ni ontu a head, nobody wants a moon but the old mammys.

"The mornin cum, still, saft, sunshiney; cocks crowin, hens singin, birds chirpin, tuckeys gobblin—jis' the day tu sun quilts, kick, kiss, squeal, an' make love.

"All the plow-lines an' clothes-lines wer straiched tu every post an' tree. Quilts purvailed. Durn my gizzard ef two acres roun that ar house warn't jis' one solid quilt, all out a-sunnin, an' tu be seed. They dazzled the eyes, skeered the hosses, gin wimen the heart-burn, an' perdominated.

"To'ards sundown the he's begun tu drap in. Yearnis' needil-drivin cummenced tu lose ground; threads broke ofen, thimbils got los', an'

quilts needed anuther roll. Gigglin, winkin, whisperin, smoofin ove har, an' gals a-ticklin one anuther, wer a-gainin every inch ove groun what the needils los'. Did yu ever notis, George, at all soshul getherins, when the he's begin tu gather, that the young she's begin tu tickil one anuther an' the ole maids swell thar tails, roach up thar backs, an' sharpen thar nails ontu the bed-posts an' door jams, an' spit an' groan sorter like cats a-courtin? Dus hit mean *rale* rath, ur is hit a dare tu the he's, sorter kivered up wif the outside signs ove danger? I honestly b'leve that the young shes' ticklin means, 'Cum an' take this job ofen our hans.' But that swelling I jis' don't onderstan; dus yu? Hit looks skeery, an' I never tetch one ove em when they am in the swellin way. I may be mistaken'd 'bout the ticklin bisiness too; hit may be dun like a feller chaws poplar bark when he haint got any terbacker, a-sorter better nur nun make-shif. I dus know one thing tu a certainty: that is, when the he's take hold the ticklin quits, an' ef yu gits one ove the old maids out tu hersef, then she subsides an' is the smoofes, sleekes, saft thing yu ever seed, an' dam ef yu can't hear her purr, jis' es plain!

"But then, George, gals an' ole maids haint the things tu fool time away on. Hits widders, by golly, what am the rale sensibil, steady-goin, never-skeerin, never-kickin, willin, sperrited, smoof pacers. They cum clost up tu the hoss-block, standin still wif thar purty silky years playin, an' the naik-veins a-throbbin, an' waits fur the word, which ove course yu gives, arter yu finds yer feet well in the stirrup, an' away they moves like a cradil on cushioned rockers, ur a spring buggy runnin in damp san'. A tetch ove the bridil, an' they know yu wants em tu turn, an' they dus hit es willin es ef the idear wer thar own. I be dod rabbited ef a man can't 'propriate happiness by the skinful ef he is in contack wif sumbody's widder, an' is smart. Gin me a willin widder, the yeath over: what they don't know, haint worth larnin. They hes all been tu Jamakey an' larnt how sugar's made, an' know how tu sweeten wif hit; an' by golly, they is always ready to use hit. All yu hes tu du is tu find the spoon, an' then drink cumfort till yer blind. Nex tu good sperrits an' my laigs, I likes a twenty-five year old widder, wif roun ankils, an' bright eyes, honestly an' squarly lookin intu yurn, an' sayin es plainly es a partrige

sez 'Bob White,' 'Don't be afraid ove me; I hes been thar; yu know hit ef yu hes eny sense, an' thar's no use in eny humbug, ole feller—cum ahead!'

"Ef yu onderstands widder nater, they ken save yu a power ove troubil, onsartinty, an' time, an' ef yu is interprisin yu gits mons'rous well paid fur hit. The very soun ove thar littil shoe-heels speak full trainin, an' hes a knowin click as they tap the floor; an' the rustil ove thar dress sez, 'I dar yu tu ax me.'

"When yu hes made up yer mind tu court one, jis' go at hit like hit wer a job ove rail-maulin. Ware yer workin close, use yer common, everyday moshuns an' words, an' abuv all, fling away yer cinament ile vial an' burn all yer love songs. No use in tryin tu fool em, fur they sees plum thru yu, a durn'd sight plainer than they dus thru thar veils. No use in a pasted shut; she's been thar. No use in borrowin a cavortin fat hoss; she's been thar. No use in cloves, tu kill whisky breff; she's been thar. No use in buying clost curtains fur yer bed, fur she has been thar. Widders am a speshul means, George, fur ripenin green men, killin off weak ones, an makin 'ternally happy the soun ones.

"Well, es I sed afore, I flew the track an' got ontu the widders. The fellers begun tu ride up an' walk up, sorter slow, like they warn't in a hurry, the durn'd 'saitful raskils, hitchin thar critters tu enything they cud find. One red-comb'd, long-spurr'd, dominecker feller, frum town, in a red an' white grid-iron jackid an' patent leather gaiters, hitched his hoss, a wild, skeery, wall-eyed devil, inside the yard palins, tu a cherry tree lim'. Thinks I, that hoss hes a skeer intu him big enuf tu run intu town, an' perhaps beyant hit, ef I kin only tetch hit off; so I sot intu thinkin.

"One aind ove a long clothes-line, wif nine dimunt quilts ontu hit, wer tied tu the same cherry tree that the hoss wer. I tuck my knife and socked hit thru every quilt, 'bout the middil, an' jis' below the rope, an' tied them thar wif bark, so they cudent slip. Then I went tu the back aind, an' ontied hit frum the pos', knottin in a hoe-handil, by the middil, tu keep the quilts frum slippin off ef my bark strings failed, an' laid hit on the groun. Then I went tu the tuther aind: thar wer 'bout ten foot tu

spar, a-lyin on the groun arter tyin tu the tree. I tuck hit atwix Wall-eye's hine laigs, an' tied hit fas' tu bof stirrups, an' then cut the cherry tree lim' betwix his bridil an' the tree, almos' off. Now, mine yu thar were two ur three uther ropes full ove quilts atween me an' the hous', so I were pruty well hid frum thar. I jis' tore off a palin frum the fence, an' tuck hit in bof hans, an' arter raisin hit 'way up yander, I fotch hit down, es hard es I cud, flatsided to'ards the groun, an' hit acksidentally happen'd tu hit Wall-eye, 'bout nine inches ahead ove the root ove his tail. Hit landed so hard that hit made my hans tingle, an' then busted intu splinters. The first things I did, wer tu feel ove mysef, on the same spot whar hit hed hit the hoss. I cudent help duin hit tu save my life, an' I swar I felt sum ove Wall-eye's sensashun, jis' es plain. The fust thing he did, wer tu tare down the lim' wif a twenty-foot jump, his head to'ards the hous'. Thinks I, now yu hev dun hit, yu durn'd wall-eyed fool! tarin down that lim' wer the beginin ove all the troubil, an' the hoss did hit hisset; my conshuns felt clar es a mountin spring, an' I wer in a frame ove mine tu obsarve things es they happen'd, an' they soon begun tu happen purty clost arter one anuther rite then, an' thar, an' tharabouts, clean ontu town, thru hit, an' still wer a-happenin, in the woods beyant thar ni ontu eleven mile frum ole man Yardley's gate, an' four beyant town.

"The fust line ove quilts he tried tu jump, but broke hit down; the nex one he ran onder; the rope cotch ontu the ho'n ove the saddil, broke at bof ainds, an' went along wif the hoss, the cherry tree lim' an' the fust line ove quilts, what I hed proverdensally tied fas' tu the rope. That's what I calls foresight, George. Right furnint the frunt door he cum in contack wif old Missis Yardley hersef, an' anuther ole 'oman; they wer a-holdin a nine dimunt quilt spread out, a-'zaminin hit, an' a-praisin hits perfeckshuns. The durn'd onmanerly, wall-eyed fool run plum over Missis Yardley, frum ahine, stompt one hine food through the quilt, takin hit along, ak-kickin ontil he made hits corners snap like a whip. The gals screamed, the men hollered wo! an' the ole 'oman wer toted intu the hous' limber es a wet string, an' every word she sed wer, 'Oh, my preshus nine dimunt quilt!'

"Wall-eye busted thru the palins, an' Dominicker sed 'im, made a mor-

tal rush fur his bitts, wer too late fur them, but in good time fur the strings ove flying quilts, got tangled amung em, an' the gridiron jackid patren wer los' tu my sight amung star an' Irish chain quilts; he went frum that quiltin at the rate ove thuty miles tu the hour. Nuffin lef on the lot ove the hole consarn, but a nine biler hat, a par ove gloves, an' the jack ove hearts.

"What a onmanerly, suddin way ove leavin places sum folks hev got, enyhow.

"Thinks I, well, that fool hoss, tarin down that cherry tree lim', hes dun sum good, enyhow; hit hes put the ole 'oman outen the way fur the balance ove the quiltin, an' tuck Dominicker outen the way an' outen danger, fur that gridiron jackid wud a-bred a scab on his nose afore midnite! hit wer morrily boun tu du hit.

"Two months arterwards, I tracked the route that hoss tuck in his kalamatus skeer, by quilt rags, tufts ove cotton, bunches ove har (human an' hoss), an' scraps ove a gridiron jackid stickin ontu the bushes, an' plum at the aind ove hit, whar all signs gin out, I foun a piece ove watch chain an' a hosses head. The places what know'd Dominicker, know'd im no more.

"Well, arter they'd tuck the ole 'oman up stairs an' camfired her tu sleep, things begun tu work agin. The widders broke the ice, an' arter a littil gigilin, goblin, an' gabblin, the kissin begun. *Smack!*—'Thar, now,' a widder sed that. *Pop!*—'Oh, don't!' *Pfip!*—'Oh, yu quit! *Plosh!*—'Go *way* yu awkerd critter, yu kissed me in the eye!' anuther widder sed that. *Bop!* 'Now yu ar satisfied, I recon, big mouf!' *Vip!*—'That haint fair!' *Spat!*—'Oh, lordy! May, cum pull Bill away; he's a-tanglin my har'. *Thut!*—'I jis' d-a-r-e yu tu du that agin!' a widder sed that, too. Hit sounded all 'roun that room like poppin co'n in a hot skillet, an' wer pow'ful sujestif.

"Hit kep on ontil I be durn'd ef *my* bristils didn't begin tu rise, an' sumthin like a cold buckshot wud run down the marrow in my backbone 'bout every ten secons, an' then run up agin, tolerabil hot. I kep a swallerin wif nuthin tu swaller, an' my face felt swell'd; an' yet I wer fear'd tu make a bulge. Thinks I, I'll ketch one out tu hersef torreckly, an' then I guess we'll rastil. Purty soon Sal Yardley started fur the smoke-

'ous, so I jis' gin my head a few short shakes, let down one ove my wings a-trailin, an' sirkiled roun her wif a side twis' in my naik, steppin side-wise, an' a-fetchin up my himnos' foot wif a sorter jerkin slide at every step. Sez I, 'Too coo-took a-too." She onderstood hit, an stopt, sorter spreadin her shoulders. An' jis' es I hed pouch'd out my mouf, an' wer a-reachin forrid wif hit, fur the article hitsef, sunthin interfared wif me, hit did. George, wer yu ever ontu yer hans an' knees, an' let a hell-tarin big, mad ram, wif a ten-yard run, but yu yearnis'ly, jis onst, right squar ontu the pint ove yer back-bone?"

"No, you fool; why do you ask?"

"Kaze I wanted tu know ef yu cud hev a realizin' noshun ove my shock. Hits scarcely worth while tu try to make yu onderstan the case by words only, onles yu hev been tetched in that way. Gr-eat golly! the fust thing I felt, I tuck hit tu be a back-ackshun yeathquake; an' the fust thing I seed wer my chaw'r terbacker a-flying over Sal's head like a skeer'd bat. My mouf wer pouch'd out, ready fur the article hitsef, yu know, an' hit went outen the roun hole like the wad outen a pop-gun—thug! an' the fust think I know'd, I wer a flying over Sal's head too, an' a-gainin on the chaw'r terbacker fast. I wer straitened out strait, toes hinemos', middil finger-nails foremos', an' the fust thing I hearn wer, 'Yu dam Shanghi!' Great Jerus-a-lam! I lit ontu my all fours jis' in time tu but the yard gate ofen hits hinges, an' skeer loose sum more hosses—kep on in a four-footed gallop, clean acrost the lane afore I cud straiten up, an' yere I cotch up wif my chaw'r terbacker, stickin flat agin a fence-rail. I hed got so good a start that I thot hit a pity tu spile hit, so I jis' jump'd the fence an' tuck thru the orchurd. I tell yu I dusted these here close, fur I tho't hit wer arter me.

"Arter runnin a spell, I ventered tu feel roun back thar, fur sum signs ove what hed happened tu me. George, arter two pow'ful hardtugs, I pull'd out the vamp an' sole ove one ove ole man Yardley's big brogans, what he hed los' amung my coat-tails. Dre'ful! dre'ful! Arter I got hit away frum thar, my flesh went fas' asleep, frum abuv my kidneys tu my knees; about now, fur the fust time, the idear struck me, what hit wer that hed interfar'd wif me, an' los' me the kiss. Hit wer ole Yardley hed kicked me. I walked fur a month like I wer straddlin a thorn hedge.

Sich a shock, at sich a time, an' on sich a place—jis' think ove hit! hit am tremenjus, haint hit? The place feels num, right now."

"Well, Sut, how did the quilting come out?"

"How the hell du yu 'speck me tu know? I warn't thar eny more."

A "Hung" JURY

JOSEPH M. FIELD

From The Drama in Pokerville, *1846, by J. M. Field.*

A "Hung" JURY

JOSEPH M. FIELD

AMONG THE dispensers of justice in a certain central ward of *old* St. Louis, during its unpretending, "evenhanded" days, was 'Squire W——. His astute comprehension of, and rigid adherence *to,* legal proprieties are yet recollected. A case was submitted to him, "once on a time"; but, his decision not satisfying *one* of the parties (very likely to occur, by-the-by, even in primitive ages), the case was "continued"; which further step, according to the rule in justices' courts, now as then, involves the ceremony and expense of a jury.

The second trial came on, unfortunately, upon a morning which, for some good cause or other, the whole town had devoted to jubilee and rejoicing—whether it was that a great man was to be "received," or another great man dismissed, it is immaterial; suffice it that guns and drums equally did their duty in calling citizens away from theirs.

Plaintiff and defendant were punctual in their attendance before the justice, anxious to settle their difference—just as anxious to have their share of the show—and the officer was despatched to collect a jury; but, after a no less anxious search, he was obliged to return without a man, his summons going for nothing in the general excitement.

Impatient at the delay, the parties litigant agreed to waive the matter of a jury altogether; to just re-argue the matter and abide by "His Honor's" decision. But His Honor had his own more reverend *parade* of the law to enjoy, and, therefore, with a *chief justice* air, he declared that, inasmuch as that the case had been continued, and that the purpose of said continuance was entirely to obtain the sense of a *jury,* it would be all *non*sense to proceed in any less regular way. "Therefore, Mr. Constable," continued the 'Squire, "you will, by virtue of your authority, summon and compel the presence of a jury forthwith.

The constable again set forth, the "bench" relapsed into abstruse cogitation, and the plaintiff and defendant were fain to content themselves with the hope of getting clear "after a while."

Wearily went the moments; but, at length, the indefatigable officer, bathed in perspiration, returned, having secured *one* well-known, easy-going citizen, remarkable as being the largest, lovingest, and *laziest* man about town.

" 'Squire," said the panting official, "I've gotten Bob, 'cause he says it don't make much difference to him; but there isn't *nary* nother as don't say they'll see me d—d first, and so the thing's out, as far as my footin' on it goes, I reckon!" The constable wiped his brow with determination, the justice *began* to foresee a dilemma, and nothing but the "costs" prevented "the parties," in spite of their attorneys, from flipping up "head or tail" for an issue.

At length the constable made a suggestion, which the "parties" eagerly consenting to, the 'Squire finally sanctioned. This was, that Bob, the lazy gentleman just mentioned, should serve as jury "all alone by himself!"

All was settled at once; the lazy gentleman declared that it "made no difference," and, getting "a chew" from the constable, down he sat. The pleadings were despatched; the *jury* was charged; the approaching procession was heard in the distance, and all parties were only waiting to hear the verdict, when the *jury,* after one or two indolent hitches in his chair, and a leisurely discharge of tobacco juice from between his teeth, turned to the court and said—

"Well, I reckon, 'Squire, the jury'll have to *retire.*"

This was unexpected, and had not been altogether the *mode,* either,

in Justice W——'s court, inasmuch as there was no place for the jury to retire *to,* except *within themselves;* but the present body was *unanimously* of opinion that he ought to have a fair shake at the merits of the case, and so the *court* adjourned to the sidewalk, leaving the jury all to himself, with his heels on the table.

Moment after moment passed away; the litigants every now and then cast a glance in at the conscientious umpire; the procession was evidently approaching along the next street, and, suddenly, the "opposite counsel" excusing themselves, walked off towards the corner. Drums, hurrahs, &c., now began to swell upon the air, and plaintiff and defendant, after sundry inquiries as to the chances, even marched off also, leaving the 'Squire and constable to receive the verdict. The constable next became impatient, and, finally, the 'Squire himself got the fidgets; each moment seemed an age, until the dubious *twelfth* was just asked if he was "going to take the whole day or not?"

"Well, the fact is, 'Squire, the jury *can't agree,* no how. We're just *hung,* and no mistake; and, if you can't let us *stay out,* why you'd better *discharge us,* by thunder!"

The *jury* was discharged!

SIMON GETS A "Soft Snap" OUT OF HIS DADDY

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

Chapter II of Simon Suggs *by J. J. Hooper. See Introduction. This story is continuation of "How Simon Suggs 'Raised Jack'," p. 24.*

SIMON GETS A "Soft Snap" OUT OF HIS DADDY

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

IT MUST NOT be supposed that, during the walk to the place of punishment, Simon's mind was either inactive, or engaged in suggesting the grimaces and contortions wherewith he was pantomimically expressing his irreverent sentiments toward his father. Far from it. The movements of his limbs and features were the mere workings of habit—the self-grinding of the corporeal machine—for which his reasoning half was only remotely responsible. For while Simon's person was thus, on its own account, "making game" of old Jed'diah, his wits, in view of the anticipated flogging, were dashing, springing, bounding, darting about, in hot chase of some expedient suitable to the necessities of the case; much after the manner in which puss—when Betty, armed with the broom, and hotly seeking vengeance for pantry robbed or bed defiled, has closed upon her the garret doors and windows—attempts all sorts of impossible exits, to come down at last in the corner, with panting side and glaring eye, exhausted and defenceless. Our unfortunate hero could devise nothing by which he could reasonably expect to escape the heavy blows of his father. Having arrived at this conclusion and the "mulberry" about the same time, he stood with a dogged look awaiting the issue.

The old man Suggs made no remark to any one while he was seizing

up Bill—a process which, though by no means novel to Simon, seemed to excite in him a sort of painful interest. He watched it closely, as if endeavoring to learn the precise fashion of his father's knot; and when at last Bill was swung up a-tiptoe to a limb, and the whipping commenced, Simon's eye followed every movement of his father's arm; and as each blow descended upon the bare shoulders of his sable friend, his own body writhed and "wriggled" in involuntary sympathy.

"It's the devil—it's hell," said Simon to himself, "to take such a walloppin' as that. Why the old man looks like he wants to git to the holler, if he could—rot his old pictur! It's wuth, at the least, fifty cents—je-e-miny how that hurt!—yes, it's wuth three-quarters of a dollar to take that 'ere lickin'! Wonder if I'm "predestinated," as old Jed'diah says, to git the feller to it? Lord, how daddy blows! I do wish to God he'd bust wide open, the durned old deer-face! If 'twa'n't for Ben helpin' him, I b'lieve I'd give the old dog a tussel when it comes to my turn. It couldn't make the thing no wuss, if it didn't make it no better. 'Drot it! what do boys have daddies for, any how? 'Taint for nuthin' but jist to beat 'em and work 'em.—There's some use in mammies—I kin poke my finger right in the old 'oman's eye, and keep it thar, and if I say it aint thar, she'll say so too. I wish she were here to hold daddy off. If 'twa'n't so fur, I'd holler for her, any how. How she would cling to the old fellow's coat tail!"

Mr. Jedediah Suggs let down Bill and untied him. Approaching Simon, whose coat was off, "Come, Simon, son," said he, "cross them hands; I'm gwine to correct you."

"It aint no use, daddy," said Simon.

"Why so, Simon?"

"Jist bekase it aint. I'm gwine to play cars as long as I live. When I go off to myself, I'm gwine to make my livin' by it. So what's the use of beatin' me about it?"

Old Mr. Suggs groaned, as he was wont to do in the pulpit, at this display of Simon's viciousness.

"Simon," said he, "you're a poor ignunt creetur. You don't know nuthin', and you've never bin no whars. If I was to turn you off, you'd starve in a week—"

"I wish you'd try me," said Simon, "and jist see. I'd win more money in a week than you can make in a year. There ain't nobody round here kin make seed corn off o' me at cards. I'm rale smart," he added with great emphasis.

"Simon! Simon! you poor unlettered fool. Don't you know that all card-players, and chicken-fighters, and horse-racers go to hell? You crack-brained creetur you. And don't you know that them that plays cards always loses their money, and—"

"Who win's it all then, daddy?" asked Simon.

"Shet your mouth, you imperdent, slack-jawed dog. Your daddy's a-tryin' to give you some good advice, and you a-pickin' up his words that way. I knowed a young man once, when I lived in Ogletharp, as went down to Augusty and sold a hundred dollars worth of cotton for his daddy, and some o' them gambollers got him to drinkin', and the *very first* night he was with 'em they got every cent of his money."

"They couldn't get my money in a *week*," said Simon. "Any body can git these here green feller's money; them's the sort I'm a-gwine to watch for myself. Here's what kin fix the papers jist about as nice as any body."

"Well, it's no use to argify about the matter," said old Jed'diah; "What saith the Scriptur'? 'He that begetteth a fool, doeth it to his sorrow.' Hence, Simon, you're a poor, misubble fool—so cross your hands!"

"You'd jist as well not, daddy; I tell you I'm gwine to follow playin' cards for a livin', and what's the use o' bangin' a feller about it? I'm as smart as any of 'em, and Bob Smith says them Augusty fellers can't make rent off o' me."

The reverend Mr. Suggs had once in his life gone to Augusta; an extent of travel which in those days was a little unusual. His consideration among his neighbours was considerably increased by the circumstance, as he had all the benefit of the popular inference, that no man could visit the city of Augusta without acquiring a vast superiority over all his untravelled neighbours, in every department of human knowledge. Mr. Suggs then, very naturally, felt ineffably indignant that an individual who had never seen any collection of human habitations larger than a log-house village—an individual, in short, no other or better than Bob Smith, should venture to express an opinion concerning the manners,

customs, or any thing appertaining to, or in any wise connected with, the *ultima Thule* of back-woods Georgians. There were two propositions which witnessed their own truth to the mind of Mr. Suggs—the one was, that a man who had never been at Augusta, could not know any thing about that city, or any place, or any thing else; the other, that one who *had* been there must, of necessity, be not only well informed as to all things connected with the city itself, but perfectly *au fait* upon all subjects whatsoever. It was, therefore, in a tone of mingled indignation and contempt that he replied to the last remark of Simon.

"*Bob Smith* says, does he? And who's *Bob Smith?* Much does *Bob Smith* know about Augusty! he's *been thar,* I reckon! Slipped off yerly some mornin', when nobody warn't noticin', and got back afore night! It's *only* a hundred and fifty mile. Oh, yes, *Bob Smith* knows *all* about it! *I* don't know nothin' about it! *I* a'n't never been to Augusty—*I* couldn't find the road there, I reckon—ha! ha. *Bob—Smi-th!* The eternal stink! if he was only to see one o' them fine gentlemen in Augusty, with his fine broad-cloth, and bell-crown hat, and shoe-boots a-shinin' like silver, he'd take to the woods and kill himself a-runnin'. Bob Smith! that's whar all your devilment comes from, Simon."

"Bob Smith's as good as any body else, I judge; and a heap smarter than some. He showed me how to cut Jack," continued Simon, "and that's more than some people can do, if they *have* been to Augusty."

"If Bob Smith kin do it," said the old man, "I kin too. I don't know it by that name; but if it's book knowledge or plain sense, and Bob kin do it, it's reasonable to s'pose that old Jed'diah Suggs won't be bothered *bad.* Is it any ways similyar to the rule of three, Simon?"

"Pretty much, daddy, but not adzactly," said Simon, drawing a pack from his pocket, to explain. "Now daddy," he proceeded, "you see these here four cards is what we calls the Jacks. Well, now the idee is, if you'll take the pack and mix 'em all up together, I'll take off a passel from top, and the bottom one of them I take off will be one of the Jacks."

"Me to mix 'em fust?" said old Jed'diah.

"Yes."

"And you not to see but the back of the top one, when you go to 'cut', as you call it?"

"Jist so, daddy."

"And the backs all jist as like as kin be?" said the senior Suggs, examining the cards.

"More alike nor cow-peas," said Simon.

"It can't be done, Simon," observed the old man, with great solemnity.

"Bob Smith kin do it, and so kin I."

"It's agin nater, Simon; thar a'n't a man in Augusty, nor on top of the yeath that kin do it!"

"Daddy," said our hero, "ef you'll bet me—"

"What!" thundered old Mr. Suggs. *"Bet,* did you say?" and he came down with a *scorer* across Simon's shoulders—"me, Jed'diah Suggs, that's been in the Lord's sarvice these twenty years—*me* bet, you nasty, sassy, triflin' ugly—"

"I didn't go to say *that,* daddy; that warn't what I meant, adzactly. I went to say that ef you'd let me off from this here maulin' you owe me, and *give me* 'Bunch,' ef I cut Jack; I'd *give you* all this here silver, if I didn't—that's all. To be sure, I allers knowed *you* wouldn't *bet."*

Old Mr. Suggs ascertained the exact amount of the silver which his son handed him, in an old leathern pouch, for inspection. He also, mentally, compared that sum with an imaginary one, the supposed value of a certain Indian pony, called "Bunch," which he had bought for his "old woman's" Sunday riding, and which had sent the old lady into a fence corner, the first and only time she ever mounted him. As he weighed the pouch of silver in his hand, Mr. Suggs also endeavoured to analyse the character of the transaction proposed by Simon. "It sartinly *can't* be nothin' but givin', no way it kin be twisted," he murmured to himself. "I *know* he can't do it, so there's no resk. What makes bettin'? The resk. It's a one-sided business, and I'll jist let him give me all his money, and that'll put all his wild sportin' notions out of his head."

"Will you stand it, daddy?" asked Simon, by way of waking the old man up. "You mought as well, for the whippin' won't do you no good, and as for Bunch, nobody about the plantation won't ride him but me."

"Simon," replied the old man, "I agree to it. Your old daddy is in a close place about payin' for his land; and this here money—it's jist eleven dollars, lacking of twenty-five cents—will help out mightily. But mind,

Simon, ef any thing's said about this, herearter, remember, you *give* me the money."

"Very well, daddy; and ef the thing works up instid o' down, I s'pose we'll say you give *me* Bunch—eh?"

"You won't never be troubled to tell how you come by Bunch; the thing's agin nater, and can't be done. What old Jed'diah Suggs knows, he knows as good as any body. Give me them fixments, Simon."

Our hero handed the cards to his father, who, dropping the plough-line with which he had intended to tie Simon's hands, turned his back to that individual, in order to prevent his witnessing the operation of *mixing.* He then sat down, and very leisurely commenced shuffling the cards, making, however, an exceedingly awkward job of it. Restive *kings* and *queens* jumped from his hands, or obstinately refused to slide into the company of the rest of the pack. Occasionally a sprightly *knave* would insist on *facing* his neighbour; or, pressing his edge against another's, half double himself up, and then skip away. But Elder Jed'diah perseveringly continued his attempts to subdue the refractory, while heavy drops burst from his forehead, and ran down his cheeks. All of a sudden an idea, quick and penetrating as a rifle-ball, seemed to have entered the cranium of the old man. He chuckled audibly. The devil had suggested to Mr. Suggs an *impromptu* "stock," which would place the chances of Simon, already sufficiently slim, in the old man's opinion, without the range of possibility. Mr. Suggs forthwith proceeded to cull out all the *picter ones,* so as to be certain to include the *Jacks,* and place them at the bottom; with the evident intention of keeping Simon's fingers above these when he should cut. Our hero, who was quietly looking over his father's shoulders all the time, did not seem alarmed by this disposition of the cards; on the contrary, he smiled as if he felt perfectly confident of success, in spite of it.

"Now, daddy," said Simon, when his father had announced himself ready, "narry one of us aint got to look at the cards, while I'm a cuttin'; if we do, it'll spile the conjuration."

"Very well."

"And another thing—you've got to look me right dead in the eye, daddy—will you?"

"To be sure—to be sure," said Mr. Suggs; "fire away."

Simon walked up close to his father, and placed his hand on the pack. Old Mr. Suggs looked in Simon's eye, and Simon returned the look for about three seconds, during which a close observer might have detected a suspicious working of the wrist of the hand on the cards, but the elder Suggs did not remark it.

"Wake snakes! day's a-breakin'! Rise Jack!" said Simon, cutting half a dozen cards from the top of the pack, and presenting the face of the bottom one for the inspection of his father.

It was the Jack of hearts!

Old Mr. Suggs staggered back several steps with uplifted eyes and hands!

"Marciful master!" he exclaimed, "ef the boy haint! well, how in the round creation of the—! Ben, did you ever? to be sure and sartin, Satan has power on this yeath!" and Mr. Suggs groaned in very bitterness.

"You never seed nothin' like that in *Augusty,* did ye, daddy?" asked Simon, with a malicious wink at Ben.

"Simon, how *did* you do it?" queried the old man, without noticing his son's question.

"Do it, daddy? Do it? 'Taint nothin'. I done it jist as easy as—shootin'."

Whether this explanation was entirely, or in any degree, satisfactory to the perplexed mind of Elder Jed'diah Suggs, cannot, after the lapse of time which has intervened, be sufficiently ascertained. It is certain, however, that he pressed the investigation no farther, but merely requested his son Benjamin to witness the fact, that in consideration of his love and affection for his son Simon, and in order to furnish the donee with the means of leaving that portion of the state of Georgia, he bestowed upon him the impracticable pony, "Bunch."

"Jist so, daddy; jist so, I'll witness that. But it 'minds me mightily of the way mammy *give* old Trailler the side of bacon, last week. She a-sweepin' up the hath; the meat on the table—old Trailler jumps up, gethers the bacon and darts! mammy arter him with the broom-stick, as fur as the door—but seein' the dog has got the start, she shakes the stick at him and hollers, 'You sassy, aig-sukkin', roguish, gnatty, flop-eared

varmint! take it along! take it along! I only wish 'twas full of a'snic, and ox-vomit, and blue vitrul, so as 'twould cut your interls into chitlins!' That's about the way you give Bunch to Simon."

"Oh, shuh! Ben," remarked Simon, "I wouldn't run on that way; daddy couldn't help it, it was *predestinated*—'whom he hath, he will,' you know"; and the rascal pulled down the under lid of his left eye at his brother. Then addressing his father, he asked, "Warn't it, daddy?"

"To be sure—to be sure—all fixed aforehand," was old Mr. Suggs' reply.

"Didn't I tell you so, Ben?" said Simon—"I knowed it was all fixed aforehand"; and he laughed until he was purple in the face.

"What's in ye? What are ye laughin' about?" asked the old man wrothily.

"Oh, it's so funny that it could all a' been *fixed aforehand!*" said Simon, and laughed louder than before.

The obtusity of the Reverend Mr. Suggs, however, prevented his making any discoveries. He fell into a brown (?) study, and no further allusion was made to the matter.

It was evident to our hero that his father intended he should remain but one more night beneath the paternal room. What mattered it to Simon?

He went home at night, curried and fed Bunch; whispered confidentially in his ear that he was the "fastest piece of hoss-flesh, accordin' to size, that ever shaded the yeath"; and then busied himself in preparing for an early start on the morrow.

SHARP FINANCIERING

JOSEPH G. BALDWIN

From Flush Times in Alabama and Mississippi, *1853, by J. G. Baldwin.*
See Introduction.

SHARP FINANCIERING

JOSEPH G. BALDWIN

In the times of 1836, there dwelt in the pleasant town of T. a smooth oily-mannered gentlemen, who diversified a commonplace pursuit by some exciting episodes of finance—dealing occasionally in exchange, buying and selling uncurrent money, &c. We will suppose this gentleman's name to be Thompson. It happened that a Mr. Ripley of North Carolina, was in T., having some $1200, in North Carolina money, and desiring to return to the old North State with his funds, not wishing to encounter the risk of robbery through the Creek country, in which there were rumors of hostilities between the whites and the Indians, he bethought him of buying exchange on Raleigh, as the safest mode of transmitting his money. On inquiry he was referred to Mr. Thompson, as the only person dealing in exchange in that place. He called on Mr. T. and made known his wishes. With his characteristic politeness, Mr. Thompson agreed to accommodate him with a sight bill on his correspondent in Raleigh, charging him the moderate premium of five per cent for it. Mr. Thompson retired into his counting-room, and in a few minutes returned with the bill and a letter, which he delivered to Mr. Ripley, at the same time receiving the money from that gentleman plus the exchange.

As the interlocutors were exchanging valedictory compliments, it occurred to Mr. Thompson that it would be a favor to him if Mr. Ripley would be so kind as to convey to Mr. T.'s correspondent a package he was desirous of sending, which request Mr. Ripley assured Mr. T. it would afford him great pleasure to comply with. Mr. Thompson then handed Mr. Ripley a package, strongly enveloped and sealed, addressed to the Raleigh Banker, after which the gentlemen parted with many polite expressions of regard and civility.

Arriving without any accident or hindrance at Raleigh, Mr. Ripley's first care was to call on the Banker and present his documents. He found him at his office, presented the bill and letter to him, and requested payment of the former. That, said the Banker, will depend a good deal upon the contents of the package. Opening which, Mr. Ripley found the identical bills, minus the premium, he had paid Mr. T. for his bill: and which the Banker paid over to that gentleman, who was not a little surprised to find that the expert Mr. Thompson had charged him five per cent for carrying his own money to Raleigh, to avoid the risk and trouble of which he had bought the exchange.

T. used to remark that that was the safest operation, all around, he ever knew. He had got his exchange—the buyer had got his bill and the money, too,—and the drawee was fully protected! There was profit without outlay or risk.

R A R E
Ripe
G A R D E N - S E E D

GEORGE W. HARRIS

From Sut Lovingood's Yarns
(*1867*), *by G. W. Harris.*

RARE
Ripe
GARDEN-SEED

GEORGE W. HARRIS

I TELL YU now, I minds my fust big skeer jis' es well as rich boys minds thar fust boots, ur seeing the fust spotted hoss sirkis. The red top ove them boots am still a rich red stripe in thar minds, an' the burnin red ove my fust skeer hes lef es deep a scar ontu my thinkin works. Mam hed me a standin atwixt her knees. I kin feel the knobs ove her jints a-rattlin a-pas' my ribs yet. She didn't hev much petticoats tu speak ove, an' I hed but one, an' hit wer calliker slit frum the nap ove my naik tu the tail, hilt tugether at the top wif a draw-string, an' at the bottom by the hem; hit wer the handiest close I ever seed, an' wud be pow'ful comfurtin in summer if hit warn't fur the flies. Ef they was good tu run in, I'd war one yet. They beats pasted shuts, an' britches, es bad es a feather bed beats a bag ove warnut shells fur sleepin on.

"Say, George, wudn't yu like tu see me intu one 'bout haf fadid, slit, an' a-walkin jis' so, up the middil street ove yure city chuch, a-aimin fur yure pew pen, an' hit chock full ove yure fine city gal friends, jis' arter the peopil hed sot down frum the fust prayer, an' the orgin beginin tu groan; what wud yu du in sich a margincy? say hoss?"

"Why, I'd shoot you dead, Monday morning before eight o'clock," was my reply.

"Well, I speck yu wud; but yu'd take a rale ole maid faint fus, rite amung them ar gals. Lordy! wudn't yu be shamed ove me! Yit why not ten chuch in sich a suit, when yu hesn't got no store clothes?

"Well, es I wer sayin, mam wer feedin us brats ontu mush an' milk, wifout the milk, an' es I wer the baby then, she hilt me so es tu see that I got my sheer. Whar thar ain't enuf feed, big childer roots littil childer outen the troff, an' gobbils up thar part. Jis' so the yeath over: bishops eats elders, elders eats common peopil; they eats sich cattil es me, I eats possums, possums eats chickins, chickins swallers wums, an' wums am content tu eat dus, an' the dus am the aind ove hit all. Hit am all es regilur es the souns frum the tribil down tu the bull base ove a fiddil in good tchune, an' I speck hit am right, ur hit wudn't be 'lowed.

"'*The sheriff!*' his'd mam in a keen trimblin whisper; hit sounded tu me like the skreech ove a hen when she sez 'hawk,' tu her little rounsturn'd, fuzzy, bead-eyed, stripid-backs.

"I actid jis' adzacly as they dus; I darted on all fours onder mam's petticoatails, an' thar I met, face tu face, the wooden bowl, an' the mush, an' the spoon what she slid onder frum tuther side. I'se mad at mysef yet, fur rite thar I show'd the fust flash ove the nat'ral born durn fool what I now is. I orter et hit all up, in jestis tu my stumick an' my growin, while the sheriff wer levyin ontu the bed an' the cheers. Tu this day, ef enybody sez 'sheriff,' I feels skeer, an' ef I hears constabil menshun'd, my laigs goes thru runnin moshuns, even ef I is asleep. Did yu ever watch a dorg dreamin ove rabbit huntin? Thems the moshuns, an' the feelin am the rabbit's.

"Sheriffs am orful 'spectabil peopil; everybody looks up tu em. I never adzacly seed the 'spectabil part mysef. I'se too fear'd ove em, I reckon, tu 'zamin fur hit much. One thing I know, no country atwix yere an' Tophit kin ever 'lect me tu sell out widders' plunder, ur poor men's co'n, an' the tho'ts ove hit gins me a good feelin; hit sorter flashes thru my heart when I thinks ove hit. I axed a passun onst, what hit cud be, an' he pernounced hit tu be *onregenerit pride,* what I orter squelch in prayer, an' in tendin chuch on colleckshun days. I wer in hopes it mout be 'ligion, ur sence, a-soakin intu me; hit feels good, enyhow, an' I don't keer ef every

suckit rider outen jail knows hit. Sheriffs' shuts allers hes nettil dus ur fleas inside ove em when they lies down tu sleep, an' I'se glad ove hit, fur they'se allers discumfortin me, durn em. I scarcely ever git tu drink a ho'n, ur eat a mess in peace. I'll hurt one sum day, see ef I don't. Show me a sheriff a-steppin softly roun, an' a-sorter sightin at me, an' I'll show yu a far sampil ove the speed ove a express ingine, fired up wif rich, dry, rosiny skeers. They don't ketch me *much,* usin only human laigs es wepuns.

"Ole John Doltin wer a 'spectabil sheriff, monsusly so, an' hed the bes' scent fur poor fugatif devils, an' wimen, I ever seed; he wer sure fire. Well, he toted a warrun fur this yere skinful ove durn'd fool, 'bout that ar misfortnit nigger meetin bisness, ontil he wore hit intu six seperit squar bits, an' hed wore out much shoe leather a-chasin ove me. I'd foun a doggery in full milk, an' hated pow'ful bad tu leave that settilment while hit suck'd free; so I sot intu sorter try an' wean him off frum botherin me so much. I suckseedid so well that he not only quit racin ove me, an' wimen, but he wer tetotaly spiled es as a sheriff, an' los' the 'spectabil seckshun ove his karacter. Tu make yu fool fellers onderstan how hit wer done, I mus' interjuice yure minds tu one Wat Mastin, a bullit-headed yung black-smith.

"Well, las' year—no hit wer the year afore las'—in struttin an' gobblin time, Wat felt his keepin right warm, so he sot intu bellerin an' pawin up dus in the neighborhood roun the ole widder McKildrin's. The more dus he flung up, the wus he got, ontil at las, he jis cudn't stan the ticklin sen-sashuns anuther minnit; so he put fur the county court clark's offis, wif his hans sock'd down deep intu his britchis pockets, like he wer fear'd ove pick-pockets, his back roach'd roun, an' a-chompin his teef ontil he splotch'd his whiskers wif foam. Oh! he wer yearnis' hot, an' es restless es a cockroach in a hot skillit."

"What was the matter with this Mr. Mastin? I cannot understand you, Mr. Lovingood; had he hydrophobia?" remarked a man in a square-tail coat, and cloth gaiters, who was obtaining subscribers for some forthcoming Encyclopedia of Useful Knowledge, who had quarters at our camp, uninvited, and really unwanted.

"What du yu mean by high-dry-foby?" and Sut looked puzzled.

"A madness produced by being bit by some rabid animal," explained Square-tail, in a pompous manner.

"Yas, hoss, he hed high-dry-foby *orful,* an' Mary McKildrin, the widder McKildrin's only darter, hed gin him the complaint; I don't know whether she bit 'im ur not; he mout a-cotch hit frum her bref, an' he wer now in the roach back, chompin stage ove the sickness, so he wer arter the clark fur a tickit tu the hospital. Well, the clark sole 'im a piece ove paper, part printin an' part ritin, wif a picter ove two pigs' hearts, what sum boy hed shot a arrer thru, an' lef hit stickin, printed at the top. That paper wer a splicin pass—sum calls hit a par ove licins—an' that very nite he tuck Mary, fur better, fur wus, tu hev an' tu hole tu him his heirs, an'—"

"Allow me to interrupt you," said our guest; "you do not quote the marriage ceremony correctly."

"Yu go tu *hell,* mistofer; yu bothers me."

This outrageous rebuff took the stranger all aback, and he sat down.

"Whar wer I? Oh yas, he married Mary tight an' fas', an' nex day he wer abil tu be about. His coat tho', an' his trousis look'd jis' a skrimshun too big, loose like, an' heavy tu tote. I axed him ef he felt soun. He sed yas, but he'd welded a steamboat shaftez the day afore, an' wer sorter tired like. Thar he tole a durn lie, fur he'd been a-ho'nin up dirt mos' ove the day, roun the widder's garden, an' bellerin in the orchard. Mary an' him sot squar intu hous'-keepin, an' 'mung uther things he bot a lot ove *rar ripe garden-seed,* frum a Yankee peddler. Rar ripe co'n, rar ripe peas, rar ripe taters, rar ripe everything, an' the two yung durn'd fools wer dreadfully exercis'd 'bout hit. Wat sed he ment tu git him a rar ripe hammer an' anvil, an' Mary vow'd tu grashus, that she'd hev a rar ripe wheel an' loom, ef money wud git em. Purty soon arter he hed made the garden, he tuck a noshun tu work a spell down tu Ataylanty, in the railroad shop, es he sed he hed a sorter ailin in his back, an' he tho't weldin rail car-tire an' ingine axiltrees, wer lighter work nur sharpinin plows, an' puttin lap-links in trace-chains. So down he went, an' foun hit agreed wif him, fur he didn't cum back ontil the middil ove August. The fust thing he seed when he landid intu his cabin-door, wer a shoe-box wif

wockers onder hit, an' the nex thing he seed, wer Mary herself, propped up in bed, an' the nex thing he seed arter that, wer a par ove littil rat-eyes a-shinin' abuv the aind ove the guilt, ontu Mary's arm, an' the nex an' las' thing he seed wer the two littil rat-eyes aforesed, a-turnin intu two hundred thousand big green stars, an' a-swingin roun an' roun the room, faster an' faster, ontil they mix'd intu one orful green flash. He drap't intu a limber pile on the floor. The durn'd fool what hed weldid the steamboat shaftez hed fainted safe an' soun es a gal skeered at a mad bull. Mary fotch a weak cat-scream, an' kivered her head, an' sot intu work ontu a whifflin dry cry, while littil Rat-eyes gin hitssef up tu suckin. Cryin an' suckin bof at onst ain't far; mus' cum pow'ful strainin on the wet secksun ove an' 'oman's constitushun; yet hit am ofen dun, an' more too. Ole Missis McKildrin, what wer a-nussin Mary, jis' got up frum knittin, an' flung a big gourd ove warter squar intu Wat's face, then she fotch a glass bottil ove swell-skull whisky outen the three-cornered cupboard, an' stood furnint Wat, a-holdin hit in wun han, an' the tin cup in tuther, watin fur Wat tu cum tu. She wer the piusses lookin ole 'oman jis' then, yu ever seed outside ove a prayer-meetin. Arter a spell, Wat begun tu move, twitchin his fingers, an' battin his eyes, sorter 'stonished like. That pius lookin statue sed tu him:

" 'My son, jis' take a drap ove sperrits, honey. Yu'se very sick, dumplin, don't take on darlin, ef yu kin help hit, ducky, fur poor Margarit Jane am mons'ous ailin, an' the leas' nise ur takin on will kill the poor sufferin dear, an' yu'll loose yure tuckil ducky duv ove a sweet wifey, arter all she's dun gone thru fur yu. My dear son Watty, yu mus' consider her feelins a littil.' Sez Wat, a-turnin up his eyes at that vartus ole relick, sorter sick like—

" 'I is a-considerin em a heap, rite now.'

" 'Oh that's right, my good kine child.'

"Oh dam ef ole muther-in-lors can't plaster humbug over a feller, jis' es saft an' easy es they spreads a camrick hanketcher over a three hour ole baby's face; yu don't feel hit at all, but hit am thar, a plum inch thick, an' stickin fas es court-plaster. She raised Wat's head, an' sot the aidge ove the tin cup agin his lower teef, an' turned up the bottim slow an' keerful, a-winkin at Mary, hu wer a-peepin over the aidge ove the coverlid, tu see

ef Wat tuck the *perskripshun,* fur a heap ove famerly cumfort 'pended on that ar ho'n ove sperrits. *Wun* ho'n allers saftens a man, the yeath over. Wat keep a-battin his eyes, wus nur a owl in daylight; at las' he raised hissef ontu wun elbow, an' rested his head in that han, sorter weak like. Sez he, mons'ous trimblin an' slow: 'Aprile—May—June—July—an' mos'—haf—ove—August,' a-countin the months ontu the fingers ove tuther han, wif the thumb, a-shakin ove his head an' lookin at his spread fingers like they warn't his'n, ur they wer nastied wif sumfin. Then he counted em agin, slower, Aprile—May—June—July—an', mos' haf ove August, an' he runs his thumb atwixt his fingers, es meanin mos' haf ove August, an' look'd at the pint ove hit, like hit mout be a snake's head. He raised his eyes tu the widder's face, who wer standin jis' es steady es a hitchin pos', an' still a-warin that pius 'spression ontu her pussonal feturs, an' a flood ove saft luv fur Wat, a-shinin strait frum her eyes intu his'n. Sez he, 'That jis' makes four munths, an' mos' a half, don't hit, Missis McKildrin?' She never sed one word. Wat reached fur the hath, an' got a dead fire-coal; then he made a mark clean acrost a floor-plank. Sez he, 'Aprile,' a-holdin down the coal ontu the aind ove the mark, like he wer fear'd hit mout blow away afore he got hit christened Aprile. Sez he, 'May'—an' he marked across the board agin; then he counted the marks, one, two, a-dottin at em wif the coal. 'June,' an' he marked agin, one, two, three; counted wif the pint ove the coal. He scratched his head wif the littil finger ove the han holdin the charcoal, an' he drawed hit slowly acrost the board agin, peepin onder his wrist tu see when hit reached the crack, an' sez he, 'July,' es he lifted the coal; 'one, two, three, four,' countin frum lef tu right, an' then frum right tu lef. 'That haint but four, no way I kin fix hit. Ole Pike hissef cudn't make hit five, ef he wer tu sifer ontu hit ontil his laigs turned intu figger eights.' Then he made a mark, haf acrost a plank, spit on his finger, an' rubbed off a haf inch ove the aid, an' sez he, 'Mos haf ove August. He looked up at the widder, an' thar she wer, same es ever, still a-holdin the flask agin her bussum, an' sez he 'Four months, an' mos' a haf. *Haint enuf, is hit, mammy?* hits jis' 'bout (lackin a littil) *haf enuf,* haint hit, mammy?'

"Missis McKildrin shuck her head sorter onsartin like, an' sez she, 'Take a drap more sperrits, Watty, my dear pet; dus yu mine buyin that

ar rar ripe seed, frum the peddler?' Wat nodded his head, an' looked 'what ove hit,' but didn't say hit.

" 'This is what cums ove hit, an' four months an' a half am rar ripe time fur babys, adzackly. Tu be sure, hit lacks a day ur two, but Margarit Jane wer allers a pow'ful interprizin gal, an' a yearly rizer.' Sez Wat,

" 'How about the 'taters?'

" 'Oh, *we* et 'taters es big es goose aigs, afore ole Missis Collinze's blossomed.'

" 'How 'bout co'n?'

" 'Oh, we shaved down roasin years afore hern tassel'd—

" 'An' peas?'

" 'Yes son, we hed gobs an' lots in three weeks. Everything cums in adzackly half the time that hit takes the ole sort, an' yu *knows,* my darlin son, yu planted hit waseful. I tho't then you'd rar ripe everything on the place. Yu planted *often,* too, didn't yu luv? fur fear hit wudn't cum up.'

" 'Ye-ye-s-s he—he did,' sed Mary a-cryin. Wat studies pow'ful deep a spell, an' the widder jis' waited. Widders allers wait, an' allers win. At las, sez he, 'Mammy.' She looked at Mary, an' winked these yere words at her, es plain es she cud a-talked em. 'Yu hearn him call me *mammy twiste.* I'se *got him* now. His back-bone's a-limberin fas', he'll own the baby yet, see ef he don't. Jis' hole still, my darter, an' let yer mammy knead this dough, then yu may bake hit es brown es yu please.'

" 'Mammy, when I married on the fust day ove Aprile'— The widder look'd oneasy; she tho't he mout be a-cupplin that day, his weddin, an' the idear, dam fool, tugether. But he warn't, fur he sed 'That day I gin ole man Collins my note ove han fur a hundred dullars, jew in one year arter date, the balluns on this lan. Dus yu think that ar seed will change the *time* eny, ur will hit alter the *amount?'* An' Wat looked at her powerful ankshus. She raised the whisky bottil way abuv her head, wif her thumb on the mouf, an' fotch the bottim down ontu her han, spat. Sez she, 'Watty, my dear b'lovid son, pripar tu pay *two* hundred dullars 'bout the fust ove October, fur hit'll be jew jis' then, *es* sure es that littil black-eyed angel in the bed thar, am yer darter.'

"Wat drap't his head, an' sed, *'Then hits a dam sure thing.'* Rite yere,

the baby fotch a rattlin loud squall, (I speck Mary wer sorter figetty jis' then, an' hurt hit). 'Yas' (sez Wat, a-wallin a red eye to'ards the bed); 'my littil she—what wer hit yu called her name, mammy?' 'I called her a sweet littil angel, an' she is wun, es sure es yu're her daddy, my b'loved son.' 'Well,' sez Wat, 'my littil sweet, patent rar ripe she angel, ef yu lives tu marryin time, yu'll 'stonish sum man body outen his shut, ef yu don't rar ripe lose hits vartu arter the fust plantin, that's all.' He rared up on aid, wif his mouf pouch'd out. He had a pow'ful forrid, fur-reachin, bread funnel, enyhow—cud a-bit the aigs outen a catfish, in two-foot warter, wifout wettin his eyebrows. 'Dod durn rar ripe seed, an' rare ripe peddlers, an' rare ripe notes tu the hottes' corner ove—'

" 'Stop Watty, *darlin,* don't swar; 'member yu belongs tu meetin.'

" 'My blacksmith's fire,' ainded Wat, an' he studies a long spell; sez he,

" 'Did you save eny ove that infunnel doubil-trigger seed?' 'Yas,' sez the widder, 'thar in that bag by the cupboard. Wat got up ofen the floor, tuck a countin sorter look at the charcoal marks, an' reached down the bag; he went tu the door an' called 'Suke, muley! Suke, Suke, cow, chick, chick, chicky chick.' 'Wat's yu gwine tu du now, my dear son?' sed Missis McKildrin. 'I'se jis' gwine tu feed this actif *smart* trick tu the cows, an' the hens, that's what I'se gwine tu du. Ole muley haint hed a calf in two years, an' I'll eat sum rar ripe aigs.' Mary now venter'd tu speak: 'Husban, I ain't sure hit'll work on hens; cum an' kiss me, my luv.' 'I hain't sure hit'll work on hens, either,' sed Wat. 'They's powerful onsartin in thar ways, well es wimen,' an' he flung out a hanful spiteful like. 'Takin tha rar ripe invenshun all tugether, frum 'taters an' peas tu notes ove han, an' childer, I can't say I likes hit much,' an' he flung out anuther hanful. 'Yer mam hed thuteen the ole way, an' ef this truck stays 'bout the hous', yu'se good fur twenty-six, maybe thuty, fur yu'se a pow'ful interprizin gal, yer mam sez,' an' he flung out anuther hanful, overhandid, es hard es ef he wer flingin rocks at a stealin sow. 'Make yere mine easy,' sed the widder 'hit never works on married folks only the fust time.' 'Say them words agin,' sed Wat, 'I'se glad tu hear em. Is hit the same way wif notes ove han?' 'I speck hit am,' answer'd the widder, wif jis' a taste ove strong vinegar in the words, es she sot the flask in the cupboard wif a push.

"Jis' then ole Doltin, the sheriff, rid up, an' started 'stonished when he seed Wat, but he, quick es an 'oman kin hide a strange hat, drawed the puckerin-string ove that legil face ove his'n, an' fotch hit up tu the 'know'd yer wer at home,' sorter look, an' wishin Wat much joy. Sed he'd fotch the baby a present, a par ove red shoes, an' a calliker dress, fur the lov he bore hits granmam. Missis McKildrin tole him what the rar ripe hed dun, an' he swore hit allers worked jis' that way, an' wer 'stonished at Wat's not knowin hit; an' they talked so fas', an' so much, that the more Wat listened the less he know'd.

"Arter the sheriff lef, they onrolled the bundil, an' Wat straitched out the calliker in the yard. He step't hit off keerfully, ten yards, an a littil the rise. He puss'd up his mouf, an' blow'd out a whistil seven foot long, lookin up an' down the middil stripe ove the drygoods, frum aind tu aind. Sez he, 'Missis McKildrin, that'll make Rar Ripe a good *full* frock, won't hit?' 'Y-a-s,' sed she, wif her hans laid up along her jaw, like she wer studyin the thing keerfully. 'My son, I thinks hit will, an' I wer jis' a-thinkin ef hit wer cut tu 'vantage, thar *mout* be nuff lef, squeezed out tu make yu a Sunday shutin shut, makin the ruffils an' ban outen suthin else.' 'Put hit in the bag what the rar ripe wer in, an' by mornin thar'll be nuff fur the rufflils an' bans, an' you mout make the tail tu drag the yeath, wifout squeezin ur pecin,' sez Wat, an' he put a few small wrinkils in the pint ove his nose, what seemed tu bother the widder tu make out the meanin ove; they look'd mons'ous like the outward signs ove an onb'lever. Jis' then his eyes sot fas' ontu sumthin a-lyin on the groun whar he'd onrolled the bundil; he walk'd up tu hit slow, sorter like a feller goes up tu a log, arter he thinks he seed a snake run onder. He walk'd clean roun hit twiste, never takin his eyes ofen hit. At las' he lifted hit on his instep, an' hilt out his laig strait at that widdered muther-in-lor ove his'n. Sez he, 'What mout yu call that? Red baby's shoes don't giner'lly hev teeth, dus they?' 'Don't yu *know* hits a tuckin comb, Watty? The store-keeper's make a sorter blunder, I speck,' sed that vartus petticoatful ove widderhood. 'Maybe he hes; I'se durn sure I *hes,*' sed Wat, an' he wrinkil'd his nose agin, mons'ous botherinly tu that watchful widder. He scratched his head a spell; sez he, 'Ten yards an' the rise fur a baby's frock, *an' hit rar ripe at that, gits me;* an' that ar tuckin comb gits me wus.' 'Oh, fiddle-

sticks an' flusterashun,' sez she. 'Save the comb; baby'll soon want hit.' 'That's so, mammy, I'm dam ef hit don't,' an' he slip't his foot frum onder hit, an' hit scarcely totch the yeath afore he stomp't hit, an' the teeth flew all over the widder. He look'd like he'd been stompin a blowin adder, an' went apas' the 'oman intu the cabin, in a rale Aprile tucky gobbler strut. When he tore the rapper off the sheriff's present, I seed a littil bit ove white paper fall out. Onbenowenst tu enybody, I sot my foot ontu hit, an' when they went in I socked hit deep intu my pocket, an' went over tu the still-'ous. I tuck Jim Dunkin out, an' arter swarin 'im wif a uplifted han', tu keep dark, got him tu read hit tu me, ontil hit wer printed on the mindin seckshun ove my brain. Hit run jis' so:

"My Sweet Mary:

I mayn't git the chance tu talk eny tu yu, so when Wat gits home, an' axes enything 'bout the *comb* an' *calliker,* yu tell him yer mam foun the bundil in the road. She'll back yu up in that ar statemint, ontil thar's enuf white fros' in hell tu kill snap-beans.

Notey Beney.—I hope Wat'll stay in Atlanty ontil the merlenium, don't yu, my dear duv?

Yures till deth,
Doltin.

An' tu that ar las' remark he'd sot a big D. I reckon he ment that fur dam Wat.

"Now, I jis' know'd es long as I hed that paper, I hilt four aces ontu the sheriff, an' I ment tu bet on the han, an' *go halves wif Wat,* fur I wer sorry fur him, he wer so infunely 'posed upon. I went tu school tu Sicily Burns, tu larn 'oman tricks, an' I tuck a dirplomer, I did, an' now I'd jis' like tu see the pussonal feeters ove the she 'oman what cud stock rar ripe kerds on me, durn'd fool es I is. I hed a talk wif Wat, an' soon foun out that his mine hed simmer'd down intu a strong belief that the sheriff an' Mary wer doin thar weavin in the same loom.

"Then I show'd him my four aces, an' that chip made the pot bile over, an' he jis' 'greed tu be led by me, spontanashusly.

"Jis' think on that fac' a minnit, boys; a man that hed sense enuf tu

turn a hoss shoe, an' then nail hit on toe aind foremos', being led by me, looks sorter like a plum tree barin tumil bug-balls, but hit wer jis' so, an' durn my pictur, ef I didn't lead him tu victory, strait along.

"Wat narrated hit, that he b'leved strong in rar ripe frum beans, thru notes ove han, plum tu babys, an' that his cabin shud never be wifout hit. The widder wer cheerful, Mary wer luvin, an' the sheriff wer told on the sly, by ole Mister McKildrin's remainin, an' mos' pius she half, that Wat wer es plum blind es ef his eyes wer two tuckil aigs. So the wool grow'd over *his* eyes, ontil hit wer fit tu shear, an' *dam ef I warn't at the shearin.*

"Things, tharfore, went smoof, an' es quiet es a greased waggin, runnin in san. Hits allers so, jis' afore a tarin big storm.

"By the time littil Rar Ripe wer ten weeks ole, Doltin begun tu be pow'ful plenty in the neighborhood. Even the brats know'd his hoss's tracks, an' go whar he wud, the road led ni ontu Wat's, ur the widder's, tu git thar. My time tu play my four aces hed 'bout cum."

"And so has orderly bed time. I wish to repose," remarked the man of Useful Knowledge, in the square-tail coat, and cloth gaiters.

Sut opened his eyes in wonder.

"Yu wish tu du what?"

"I wish to go to sleep."

"Then why the h—l didn't yu say so? Yu mus' talk Inglish tu me, ur not git yersef onderstood. I warn't edikated at no Injun ur nigger school. Say, bunty, warn't yu standid deep in sum creek, when the taylure man put the string to yu, fur that ar cross atwix a roundabout an' a flour barril, what yu'se got on in place of a coat?"

My self-made guest looked appealingly at me, as he untied his gaiters, evidently deeply insulted. I shook my head at Sut, who was lying on his breast, with his arms crossed for a pillow, but with head elevated like a lizard's, watching the traveler's motions with great interest.

"Say, George, what dus repose mean? That wurd wer used at me jis' now."

"Repose means rest."

"Oh, the devil hit dus! I'se glad tu hear hit, I tho't hit wer pussonal. I kin repose now, mysef. Say, ole Onsightly Peter, repose sum tu, ef you kin

in that flour barril. I ain't gwine tu hunt fur yure har ontil mor—" and Sut slept. When morning broke, the Encyclopedia, or Onsightly Peter as Sut pronounced it, had

"Folded his tent like the Arab,
And as silently stole away."

AN ARTIST in TROUBLE

D. CORCORAN

From Pickings from the Portfolio of the Reporter of the New Orleans Picayune, *1847, by D. Corcoran.*

AN ARTIST in TROUBLE

D. CORCORAN

As Recorder Baldwin was yesterday disposing of some cases of ordinary importance, a low, chubby, cabbage-headed Dutchman, and a thin, tall, attenuated man in a seedy black coat, pants to match, and a well brushed faded silk hat entered the office. The first notice of their presence which the court had was the Dutchman telling the tall, thin, attenuated gentleman in the seedy dress and faded silk hat, that he "wash a tam shon of a pitch."

At this wanton interruption of the general order of the court, the Recorder cried "Silence!" and every officer in court echoed the order.

"What is the matter?" asked the Recorder.

"Vhy, here pe von tam imposthure vhat say he painted my shon, and it aint my shon, not at all, Got tam." Here the Dutchman looked sourcrout at the tall, thin gentleman in the seedy black suit with the faded silk hat.

The Dutchman got a hint to "shut up," from one of the officers, and was told if he did not treat the court with more deference, he would have to rusticate in the calaboose for twenty-four hours.

"Will you," said the Recorder, addressing the tall, thin man—"will you explain the matter at issue between this man, who seems inclined to be

so noisy, and yourself. What is it that has brought both of you here?"

"I shall endeavour," said the tall, thin man in the seedy suit of black, "to comply with the request of the court; and although in the absence of my legal adviser I feel the weight of the responsibility which rests on me, yet trusting to the truth of my cause, to the enlightened and liberal feeling that pervades this court and this great community in every thing which relates to the fine arts, and firmly believing that in this intellectual age when genius is fostered, when true taste is appreciated, when brilliant talents are succoured and encouraged—in a word, may it please the court, when mind predominates over mere matter—I fearlessly enter on the task which the court has imposed on me, regardless of the results, when I have no one to combat but the vegetable individual—the animated pumpkin who now stands by my side."

"Got tam!" said the Dutchman.

"Silence!" said the officer. And the man in the seedy suit proceeded.

"As I was saying to the court," continued the man who looked like a target—"my picture of the transaction, like all which I have ever drawn, shall be lifelike. I shall use only the brush of truth, and my colouring shall be natural and in strict accordance with facts.—The part which I have acted in the affair, will, I am sanguine to say, furnish me with *light*. This individual's conduct,"—pointing to the Dutchman—"supplies more than a sufficient share of shade."

"Have you any complaint to make?" asked the Recorder, appearing somewhat tired of listening to the speech of the tall, thin man, which smelt strongly of vermillion, black lead and yellow ochre.

"Ah," said the tall, thin man, "there's the rub. Allow me for one moment to *brush* up my memory, and I shall an 'unvarnished tale deliver' of the transaction.

"You tam humpug," said the Dutchman, in a tone which did not reach the bench.

"My name, may it please the court," said the tall, thin man, "is Jones —Sylvester Jones, at the service of the court. I am a professor of the fine arts, or as it is vulgarly called, a painter. I am a F.R.S., and R.A., and an A.S.S. This individual here, whose name, as well as I can pronounce it, is Johan Vonhickenslaughter. What an abominable, unpoetical name!"

"No matter about the euphony of the name," said the Recorder. "What has he done?"

"Why," said the artist, "he employed me to take a portrait of his eldest son, a mere human animalcula I assure you, with no more expression in his face than there is in a peeled turnip. Well, of course, I gave a life-likeness of the boy. My great forte is in catching the expression of the eye and the muscles of the mouth, but d—n me—(beg the court's pardon)—he, I say, had no expression to catch. Well, I took the picture home, and would the court believe it, instead of paying me for it, this individual offered me personal violence because his son's portrait did not resemble a picture of the younger Bonaparte, which he had hanging up in his room, and whom, he says, his son resembles, ha! ha! ha!—Beg the court's pardon again, but really—cannot avoid laughing at the individual's idea—a perfect monomania, I assure you."

"Got tam, doesh you shay dat pe like my shon? It ish like not no one, Got tam." Here the Dutchman exhibited what the artist called a perfect likeness of Mrs. Vonhickenslaughter's first born, but which was in truth as like an antiquated Dutch doll, Admiral Vonbroom, or a pair of twin apples grafted together, as it was like the human face divine of either the young Dutchman or any one else.

"Whesh mhy shon's nose, or mhy shon's eyh's, or mhy shon's red cheeks? Got tam," said the Dutchman, as he pointed to where those different features should be on the painting.

The Recorder said he was not prepared to say what were the talents of the artist, or how far his own account of his professional abilities was correct, but he certainly did not look on the picture exhibited as a *chef d'œuvre* in the way of portrait painting, nor could he undertake to tell how nearly it resembled the original, as the amiable youth whose likeness it purported to be was not present. As there was no actual assault proven he refused to grant a warrant, and dismissed the parties, advising Mr. Vonhickenslaughter, to permit little Vonhickenslaughter to sit once more to Sylvester Jones, the artist.

The Dutchman left the office, swearing that no "tam humpug should nhever phaint hish shon." "Mhy shon," he said, "ish like young Bhonaparte, put that phicter whashn't like nhopody, Got tam."

HOW THE TIMES Served THE VIRGINIANS

JOSEPH G. BALDWIN

VIRGINIANS IN A NEW COUNTRY. THE RISE, DECLINE, AND FALL OF THE RAG EMPIRE

From Flush Times in Alabama and Mississippi, *1853, by J. G. Baldwin.*

HOW THE TIMES Served THE VIRGINIANS

JOSEPH G. BALDWIN

THE DISPOSITION to be proud and vain of one's country, and to boast of it, is a natural feeling, indulged or not in respect to the pride, vanity, and boasting, according to the character of the native: but, with a Virginian, it is a passion. It inheres in him even as the flavor of a York river oyster in that bivalve, and no distance of deportation, and no trimmings of a gracious prosperity, and no pickling in the sharp acids of adversity, can destroy it. It is a part of the Virginia character—just as the flavor is a distinctive part of the oyster—"which cannot, save by annihilating, die." It is no use talking about it—the thing may be right, or wrong: like Falstaff's victims at Gadshill, it is past praying for: it is a sort of cocoa grass that has got into the soil, and has so matted over it, and so *fibred* through it, as to have become a part of it; at least, there is no telling which is the grass and which is the soil; and certainly it is useless labor to try to root it out. You may destroy the soil, but you can't root out the grass.

Patriotism with a Virginian is a noun personal. It is the Virginian himself and something over. He loves Virginia *per se* and *propter se:* he loves her for herself and for himself—because *she is* Virginia and—everything else beside. He loves to talk about her: out of the abundance of the heart

the mouth speaketh. It makes no odds where he goes, he carries Virginia with him; not in the entirety always—but the little spot he came from is Virginia—as Swedenborg says the smallest part of the brain is an abridgement of all of it. *"Caelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt,"* was made for a Virginian. He never gets acclimated elsewhere; he never loses citizenship to the old Home. The right of expatriation is a pure abstraction to him. He may breathe in Alabama, but he lives in Virginia. His treasure is there, and his heart also. If he looks at the Delta of the Mississippi, it reminds him of James River "low grounds"; if he sees the vast prairies of Texas, it is a memorial of the meadows of the Valley. Richmond is the centre of attraction, the *depot* of all that is grand, great, good and glorious. "It is the Kentucky of a place," which the preacher described Heaven to be to the Kentucky congregation.

Those who came many years ago from the borough town, especially from the vicinity of Williamsburg, exceed, in attachment to their birthplace, if possible, the *émigrés* from the metropolis. It is refreshing in these costermonger times, to hear them speak of it:—they remember it when the old burg was the seat of fashion, taste, refinement, hospitality, wealth, wit, and all social graces; when genius threw its spell over the public assemblages and illumined the halls of justice, and when beauty brightened the social hour with her unmatched and matchless brilliancy.

Then the spirited and gifted youths of the College of old William and Mary, some of them just giving out the first scintillations of the genius that afterwards shone refulgent in the forum and the senate, added to the attractions of a society gay, cultivated and refined beyond example—*even* in the Old Dominion. A hallowed charm seems to rest upon the venerable city, clothing its very dilapidation in a drapery of romance and of serene and classic interest: as if all the sweet and softened splendor which invests the "Midsummer Night's Dream" were poured in a flood of mellow and poetic radiance over the now quiet and half "deserted village." There is something in the shadow from the old college walls, cast by the moon upon the grass and sleeping on the sward, that throws a like shadow soft, sad and melancholy upon the heart of the returning pilgrim who saunters out to view again, by moonlight, his old *Alma Mater*—the nursing mother of such a list and such a line of statesmen and heroes.

There is nothing presumptuously forward in this Virginianism. The Virginian does not make broad his phylacteries and crow over the poor Carolinian and Tennesseeian. He does not reproach him with his misfortune of birthplace. No, he thinks the affliction is enough without the triumph. The franchise of having been born in Virginia, and the prerogative founded thereon, are too patent of honor and distinction to be arrogantly pretended. The bare mention is enough. He finds occasion to let the fact be known, and then the fact is fully able to protect and take care of itself. Like a ducal title, there is no need of saying more than to name it: modesty then is a becoming and expected virtue; forbearance to boast is true dignity.

The Virginian is a magnanimous man. He never throws up to a Yankee the fact of his birthplace. He feels on the subject as a man of delicacy feels in alluding to a rope in the presence of a person, one of whose brothers "stood upon nothing and kicked at the U. S.," or to a female indiscretion, where there had been scandal concerning the family. So far do they carry this refinement, that I have known one of my countrymen, on occasion of a Bostonian owning where he was born, generously protest that he had never heard of it before. As if honest confession half obliterated the shame of the fact. Yet he does not lack the grace to acknowledge worth or merit in another, wherever the native place of that other: for it is a common thing to hear them say of a neighbor, "he is a clever fellow, *though* he *did* come from New Jersey or even Connecticut."

In politics the Virginian is learned much beyond what is written—for they have heard a great deal of speaking on that prolific subject, especially by one or two Randolphs and any number of Barbours. They read the same papers here they read in Virginia—the *Richmond Enquirer* and the *Richmond Whig*. The democrat stoutly asseverates a fact, and gives the *Enquirer* as his authority with an air that means to say, *that* settles it: while the whig quoted Hampden Pleasants with the same confidence. But the faculty of personalizing everything which the exceeding social turn of a Virginian gives him, rarely allowed a reference to the paper, *eo nomine;* but made him refer to the editor: as "Ritchie said" so and so, or "Hampden Pleasants said" this or that. When two of opposite politics got together, it was amusing, if you had nothing else to do that day, to hear

the discussion. I never knew a debate that did not start *ab urbe condita.* They not only went back to first principles, but also to first times; nor did I ever hear a discussion in which old John Adams and Thomas Jefferson did not figure—as if an interminable dispute had been going on for so many generations between those disputatious personages; as if the quarrel had begun before time, but was not to end with it. But the strangest part of it to me was, that the dispute seemed to be going on without poor Adams having any defence or champion; and never waxed hotter than when both parties agreed in denouncing the man of Braintree as the worst of public sinners and the vilest of political heretics. They both agreed on one thing, and that was to refer the matter to the Resolutions of 1798–99; which said Resolutions, like Goldsmith's "Good Natured Man," arbitrating between Mr. and Mrs. Croaker, seemed so impartial that they agreed with both parties on every occasion.

Nor do I recollect of hearing any question debated that did not resolve itself into a question of constitution—strict construction, &c.,—the constitution being a thing of that curious virtue that its chief excellency consisted in not allowing the government to do anything; or in being a regular prize fighter that knocked all laws and legislators into a cocked hat, except those of the objector's party.

Frequent reference was reciprocally made to "gorgons, hydras, and chimeras dire," to black cockades, blue lights, Essex juntos, the Reign of Terror, and some other mystic entities—but who or what these monsters were, I never could distinctly learn; and was surprised, on looking into the history of the country, to find that, by some strange oversight, no allusion was made to them.

Great is the Virginian's reverence of great men, that is to say of great Virginians. This reverence is not Unitarian. He is a Polytheist. He believes in a multitude of Virginia Gods. As the Romans of every province and village had their tutelary or other divinities, besides having divers national gods, so the Virginian of every county has his great man, the like of whom cannot be found in the new country he has exiled himself to. This sentiment of veneration for talent, especially for speaking talent,—this amiable propensity to lionize men, is not peculiar to any class of Virginians among us: it abides in all. I was amused to hear "old Culpepper," as

we call him (by nickname derived from the county he came from), declaiming in favor of the Union. "What, gentlemen," said the old man, with a sonorous swell—"what, burst up this glorious Union! and who, if *this* Union is torn up, could write another? Nobody except Henry Clay and J—S. B——, of Culpepper—and may be *they* wouldn't—and what then would you do for another?

The greatest compliment a Virginian can ever pay to a speaker, is to say that he reminds him of a Col. Broadhorn or a Captain Smith, who represented some royal-named county some forty years or less in the Virginia House of Delegates; and of whom the auditor, of course, has heard, as he made several speeches in the capitol at Richmond. But the force of the compliment is somewhat broken by a long narrative, in which the personal reminiscences of the speaker go back to sundry sketches of the Virginia statesman's efforts, and recapitulations of his sayings, interspersed, *par parenthèse,* with many valuable notes illustrative of his pedigree and performances; the whole of which, given with great historical fidelity of detail, leaves nothing to be wished for except the point, or rather, two points, the gist and the period.

It is not to be denied that Virginia is the land of orators, heroes and statesmen; and that, directly or indirectly, she has exerted an influence upon the national councils nearly as great as all the rest of the States combined. It is wonderful that a State of its size and population should have turned out such an unprecedented quantum of talent, and of talent as various in kind as prodigious in amount. She has reason to be proud; and the other States so largely in her debt (for, from Cape May to Puget's Sound she has colonized the other States and the territories with her surplus talent), ought to allow her the harmless privilege of a little bragging. In the showy talent of oratory has she especially shone. To accomplish her in this art the State has been turned into a debating society, and while she has been *talking* for the benefit of the nation, as she thought, the other, and, by nature, less favored States, have been *doing* for their own. Consequently, what she has gained in reputation, she has lost in wealth and *material aids*. Certainly the Virginia character has been less distinguished for its practical than its ornamental traits, and for its business qualities than for its speculative temper. *Cui bono* and utilitarianism, at

least until latterly, were not favorite or congenial inquiries and subjects of attention to the Virginia politician. What the Virginian was upon his native soil, that he was abroad; indeed, it may be said that the *amor patriae,* strengthened by absence, made him more of a conservative abroad than he would have been if he had stayed at home; for most of them here would not, had they been consulted, have changed either of the old constitutions.

It is far, however, from my purpose to treat of such themes. I only glance at them to show their influence on the character as it was developed on a new theatre.

Eminently social and hospitable, kind, humane, and generous is a Virginian, at home or abroad. They are so by nature and habit. These qualities and their exercise develop and strengthen other virtues. By reason of these social traits, they necessarily become well mannered, honorable, spirited, and careful of reputation, desirous of pleasing, and skilled in the accomplishments which they please. Their insular position and sparse population, mostly rural, and easy but not affluent fortunes kept them from the artificial refinements and the strong temptations which corrupt so much of the society of the old world and some portions of the new. There was no character more attractive than that of a young Virginian, fifteen years ago, of intelligence, of good family education and breeding.

It was of the instinct of a Virginian to seek society: he belongs to the gregarious, not to the solitary division of animals; and society can only be kept up by grub and gab—something to eat, and, if not something to talk about, talk. Accordingly they came accomplished already in the knowledge and the talent for these important duties.

A Virginian could always get up a good dinner. He could also do his share—a full hand's work—in disposing of one after it was got up. The qualifications for hostmanship were signal—the old Udaller himself, assisted by Claud Halrco, could not do up the thing in better style, or with a heartier relish, or a more cordial hospitality. In *petite* manners—the little attentions of the table, the filling up of the chinks of the conversation with small fugitive observations, the supplying the hooks and eyes that *kept* the discourse together, the genial good humor, which, like that of the family of the good Vicar, made up in laughter what was wanting

in wit—in these, and in the science of getting up and in getting through a picnic or chowder party, or fish fry, the Virginian, like Eclipse, was first, and there was no second. Great was he too at mixing an apple toddy, or mint julep, where ice could be got for love or money; and not deficient, by any means, when it came to his turn to do honor to his fabrics. It was in this department, that he not only shone but *out*shone, not merely all others but himself. Here he was at home indeed. His elocution, his matter, his learning, his education, were of the first order. He could discourse of everything around him with an accuracy and a fulness which would have put Coleridge's or Mrs. Ellis's table talk to the blush. Every dish was a text, horticulture, hunting, poultry, fishing—(Isaac Walton or Daniel Webster would have been charmed and instructed to hear him discourse piscatory-wise),—a slight divergence in favor of fox-chasing and a detour towards a horse-race now and then, and continual parentheses of recommendation of particular dishes or glasses— Oh! I tell you if ever there was an interesting man it was he. Others might be agreeable, but he was fascinating, irresistible, not-to-be-done-without.

In the fulness of time the new era had set in—the era of the second great experiment of independence: the experiment, namely, of credit without capital, and enterprise without honesty. The Age of Brass had succeeded the Arcadian period when men got rich by saving a part of their earnings, and lived at their own cost and in ignorance of the new plan of making fortunes on the profits of what they owed. A new theory, not found in the works on political economy, was broached. It was found out that the prejudice in favor of the metals (brass excluded) was an absurd superstition; and that, in reality, any thing else, which the parties interested in giving it currency chose, might serve as a representative of value and medium for exchange of property; and as gold and silver had served for a great number of years as representatives, the republican doctrine of rotation in office required they should give way. Accordingly it was decided that Rags, a very familiar character, and very popular and easy of access, should take their place. Rags belonged to the school of progress. He was representative of the then Young America. His administration was not tame. It was *very* spirited. It was based on the Bonapartist idea of keeping the imagination of the people excited. The leading fiscal idea of

his system was to *democratize* capital, and to make, for all purposes of trade, credit and enjoyment of wealth, the man that had *no* money a little richer, if any thing, than the man that had a million. The principle of success and basis of operation, though inexplicable in the hurry of the time, is plain enough now: it was faith. Let the public believe that a smutted rag is money, it is money: in other words, it was a sort of financial biology, which made at night the thing conjured for, the thing that was seen, so far as the patient was concerned, while the fit was on him—except that now a man does not do his trading when under the mesmeric influence: in the flush times he did.

This country was just settling up. Marvellous accounts had gone forth of the fertility of its virgin lands; and the productions of the soil were commanding a price remunerating to slave labor as it had never been remunerated before. Emigrants came flocking in from all quarters of the Union, especially from the slaveholding States. The new country seemed to be a reservoir, and every road leading to it a vagrant stream of enterprise and adventure. Money, or what passed for money, was the only cheap thing to be had. Every cross-road and every avocation presented an opening,—through which a fortune was seen by the adventurer in near perspective. Credit was a thing of course. To refuse it—if the thing was ever done—were an insult for which a bowie-knife were not a too summary or exemplary a means of redress. The State banks were issuing their bills by the sheet, like a patent steam printing-press *its* issues; and no other showing was asked of the applicant for a loan than an authentication of his great distress for money. Finance, even in its most exclusive quarter, had thus already got, in this wonderful revolution, to work upon the principles of the charity hospital. If an overseer grew tired of supervising a plantation and felt a call to the mercantile life, even if he omitted the compendious method of buying out a merchant wholesale, stock, house and good will, and laying down, at once, his bull-whip for the yard-stick —all he had to do was to go on to New York, and present himself in Pearl Street with a letter avouching his citizenship, and a clean shirt, and he was regularly given a through ticket to speedy bankruptcy.

Under this stimulating process prices rose like smoke. Lots in obscure villages were held at city prices; lands, bought at the minimum cost of

government, were sold at from thirty to forty dollars per acre, and considered dirt cheap at that. In short, the country had got to be a full antetype of California, in all except the gold. Society was wholly unorganized: there was no restraining public opinion: the law was well-nigh powerless—and religion scarcely was heard of except as furnishing the oaths and *technics* of profanity. The world saw a fair experiment of what it would have been, if the fiat had never been pronounced which decreed subsistence as the price of labor.

Money, got without work, by those unaccustomed to it, turned the heads of its possessors, and they spent it with a recklessness like that with which they gained it. The pursuits of industry neglected, riot and coarse debauchery filled up the vacant hours. "Where the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together"; and the eagles that flocked to the Southwest, were of the same sort as the *black eagles* the Duke of Saxe-Weimar saw on his celebrated journey to the Natural Bridge. "The cankers of a long peace and a calm world"—there were no Mexican wars and filibuster expeditions in those days—gathered in the villages and cities by scores.

Even the little boys caught the taint of the general infection of morals; and I knew one of them—Jim Ellett by name—to give a man ten dollars to hold him up to bet at the table of a faro-bank. James was a fast youth; and I sincerely hope he may not fulfil his early promise, and some day be *assisted up still higher.*

The groceries—*vulgice* doggeries,—were in full blast in those days, no village having less than a half-dozen all busy all the time: gaming and horse-racing were polite and well patronized amusements. I knew a Judge to adjourn two courts (or court twice) to attend a horse-race, at which he officiated judicially and ministerially, and with more appropriateness than in the judicial chair. Occasionally the scene was diversified by a murder or two, which though perpetrated from behind a corner, or behind the back of the deceased, whenever the accused *chose* to stand his trial, was always found to have been committed in self-defence, securing the homicide an honorable acquittal *at the hands of his peers.*

The old rules of business and the calculations of prudence were alike disregarded, and profligacy, in all the departments of the *crimen falsi,* held riotous carnival. Larceny grew not only respectable, but genteel, and

ruffled it in all the pomp of purple and fine linen. Swindling was raised to the dignity of the fine arts. Felony came forth from its covert, put on more seemly habiliments, and took its seat with unabashed front in the upper places of the synagogue. Before the first circles of the patrons of this brilliant and dashing villainy, Blunt Honesty felt as abashed as poor Halbert Glendinning by the courtly refinement and supercilious airs of Sir Pierce Shafton.

Public office represented, by its incumbents, the state of public morals with some approach to accuracy. Out of sixty-six receivers of public money in the new States, sixty-two were discovered to be defaulters; and the agent, sent to look into the affairs of a peccant office-holder in the South-West, reported him *minus* some tens of thousands, but advised the government to retain him, for a reason one of Aesop's fables illustrates: the agent ingeniously surmising that the appointee succeeding would do his stealing without any regard to the proficiency already made by his predecessor; while the present incumbent would probably consider, in mercy to the treasury, that he *had* done *something* of the pious duty of providing for his household.

There was no petit larceny: there was all the difference between stealing by the small and the "operations" manipulated, that there is between a single assassination and an hundred thousand men killed in an opium war. The placeman robbed with the gorgeous magnificence of a Governor-General of Bengal.

The man of straw, not worth the buttons on his shirt, with a sublime audacity, bought lands and negroes, and provided times and terms of payment which a Wall-street capitalist would have to re-cast his arrangements to meet.

Oh, Paul Clifford and Augustus Tomlinson, philosophers of the road, practical and theoretical! If ye had lived to see those times, how great an improvement on your ruder scheme of distribution would these gentle arts have seemed; arts whereby, without risk, or loss of character, or the vulgar barbarism of personal violence, the same beneficial results flowed with no greater injury to the superstitions of moral education!

With the change of times and the imagination of wealth easily acquired came a change in the thoughts and habits of the people. "Old times were

changed—old manners gone." Visions of affluence, such as crowded Dr. Samuel Johnson's mind, when advertising a sale of Thrale's Brewery, and casting a soft sheep's eye towards Thrale's widow, thronged upon the popular fancy. Avarice and hope joined partnership. It was strange how the reptile arts of humanity, as at a faro table, warmed into life beneath their heat. The *cacoethes accrescendi* became epidemic. It seized upon the universal community. The pulpits even were not safe from its insidious invasion. What men anxiously desire they willingly believe; and all believed a good time was coming—nay, had come.

"Commerce was king"—and Rags, Tag and Bobtail his cabinet council. Rags was treasurer. Banks, chartered on a specie basis, did a very flourishing business on the promissory notes of the individual stockholders ingeniously substituted in lieu of cash. They issued ten for one, the *one* being fictitious. They generously loaned all the directors could not use themselves, and were not choice whether Bardolph was the endorser for Falstaff, or Falstaff borrowed on his own proper credit, or the funds advanced him by Shallow. The stampede towards the golden temple became general: the delusion prevailed far and wide that this thing was not a burlesque on commerce and finance. Even the directors of the banks began to have their doubts whether the intended swindle was not a failure. Like Lord Clive, when reproached for extortion to the extent of some millions in Bengal, they exclaimed, after the bubble burst, "When they thought of what they had got, and what they might have got, they were astounded at their own moderation."

The old capitalists for a while stood out. With the Tory conservatism of cash in hand, worked for, they couldn't reconcile their old notions to the new régime. They looked for the thing's ending, and *then* their time. But the stampede still kept on. Paper fortunes still multiplied—houses and lands changed hands—real estate see-sawed up as morals went down on the other end of the plank—men of straw, corpulent with bank bills, strutted past them on 'Change. They began, too, to think there might be something in this new thing. Peeping cautiously, like hedge-hogs out of their holes, they saw the stream of wealth and adventurers passing by—then, looking carefully around, they inched themselves half way out—then, sallying forth and snatching up a morsel, ran back, until, at last,

grown more bold, *they* ran out too with their hoarded store, in full chase with the other unclean beast of adventure. They never got back again. Jonah's gourd withered one night, and next morning the vermin that had nestled under its broad shade were left unprotected, a prey to the swift retribution that came upon them. They were left naked, or only clothed themselves with cursing (the Specie Circular on the United States Bank) as with a garment. To drop the figure: Shylock himself couldn't live in those times, so reversed was everything. Saving paper and loaning money at a usury of fifty per cent, was for the first time since the Jews left Jerusalem, a breaking business to the operator.

The condition of society may be imagined:—the vulgarity—ignorance —fussy and arrogant pretension—unmitigated rowdyism—bullying insolence, if they did not rule the hour *seemed* to wield unchecked dominion. The workings of these choice spirits were patent upon the face of society; and the modest, unobtrusive, retiring men of worth and character (for there were many, perhaps a large majority of such) were almost lost sight of in the hurly-burly of those strange and shifting scenes.

Even in the professions were the same characteristics visible. Men dropped down into their places as from the clouds. Nobody knew who or what they were, except as they claimed, or as a surface view of their characters indicated. Instead of taking to the highway and magnanimously calling upon the wayfarer to stand and deliver, or to the fashionable larceny of credit without prospect or design of paying, some unscrupulous horse-doctor would set up his sign as "Physician and Surgeon," and draw his lancet on you, or fire at random a box of his pills into your bowels, with a vague chance of hitting some disease unknown to him, but with a better prospect of killing the patient, whom or whose administrator he charged some ten dollars a trial for his markmanship.

A superannuated justice or constable in one of the old States was metamorphosed into a lawyer; and though he knew not the distinction between a *fee tail* and a *female,* would undertake to construe, off-hand, a will involving all the subtleties of *uses and trusts.*

But this state of things could not last for ever: society cannot always stand on its head with its heels in the air.

The Jupiter Tonans of the White House saw the monster of a free

credit prowling about like a beast of apocalyptic vision, and marked him for his prey. Gathering all his bolts in his sinewy grasp, and standing back on his heels, and waving his wiry arm, he let them all fly, hard and swift upon all the hydra's heads. Then came a crash, as "if the ribs of nature broke," and a scattering, like the bursting of a thousand magazines, and a smell of brimstone, as if Pandemonium had opened a window next to earth for ventilation,—and all was silent. The beast never stirred in his tracks. To get down from the clouds to level ground, the Specie Circular was issued without warning, and the splendid lie of a false credit burst into fragments. It came in the midst of the dance and the frolic—as Tam O'Shanter came to disturb and infernal glee of the warlocks, and to disperse the rioters. Its effect was like that of a general creditor's bill in the chancery court, and a marshalling of all the assets of the trades-people. Gen. Jackson was no fairy; but he did some very pretty fairy work; in converting the bank bills back again into rags and oak-leaves. Men worth a million were insolvent for two millions: promising young cities marched back again into the wilderness. The ambitious town plat was re-annexed to the plantation, like a country girl taken home from the city. The frolic was ended, and what headaches, and feverish limbs the next morning! The retreat from Moscow was performed over again, and "Devil take the hindmost" was the tune to which the soldiers of fortune marched. The only question was as to the means of escape, and the nearest and best route to Texas. The sheriff was as busy as a militia adjutant on review day; and the lawyers were mere wreckers, earning salvage. Where are ye now, my ruffling gallants? Where now the braw cloths and watch chains and rings and fine horses? Alas! for ye—they are glimmering among the things that were—the wonder of an hour! They live only in memory, as unsubstantial as the promissory notes ye gave for them. When it came to be tested, the whole matter was found to be hollow and fallacious. Like a sum ciphered out through a long column, the first figure an error, the whole and all the parts were wrong, throughout the entire calculation.

Such is a charcoal sketch of the interesting region—now inferior to none in resources, and the character of its population—during the FLUSH TIMES, a period constituting an episode in the commercial history of the world—the reign of humbug, and wholesale insanity, just overthrown in

time to save the whole country from ruin. But while it lasted, many of our countrymen came into the South-West in time to get "a benefit." The *auri sacra fames* is a catching disease. Many Virginians had lived too fast for their fortunes, and naturally desired to recuperate: many others, with a competency, longed for wealth; and others again, with wealth, yearned —the common frailty—for still more. Perhaps some friend or relative, who had come out, wrote back flattering accounts of the El Dorado, and fired with dissatisfaction those who were doing well enough at home, by the report of his real or imagined success; for who that ever moved off, was not "doing well" in the new country, himself or friends being chroniclers.

Superior to many of the settlers in elegance of manners and general intelligence, it was the weakness of the Virginian to imagine he was superior too in the essential art of being able to hold his hand and make his way in a new country, and especially *such* a country, and at *such* a time. What a mistake that was! The times were out of joint. It was hard to say whether it were more dangerous to stand still or to move. If the emigrant stood still, he was consumed, by no slow degrees, by expenses; if he moved, ten to one he went off in a galloping consumption, by a ruinous investment. Expenses then—necessary articles about three times as high, and extra articles still more extra-priced—were a different thing in the new country from what they were in the old. In the old country, a jolly Virginian, starting the business of free living on a capital of a plantation, and fifty or sixty negroes, might reasonably calculate if no ill luck befell him, by the aid of a usurer, and the occasional sale of a negro or two, to hold out without declared insolvency, until a green old age. His estate melted like an estate in chancery, under the gradual thaw of expenses; but in this fast country, it went by the sheer cost of living—some *poker* losses included—like the fortune of the confectioner in California, who failed for one hundred thousand dollars in the six months' keeping of a candy-shop. But all the habits of his life, his taste, his associations, his education —everything—the trustingness of his disposition—his want of business qualifications—his sanguine temper—all that was Virginian in him, made him the prey, if not of imposture, at least of unfortunate speculations. Where the keenest jockey often was bit, what chance had *he?* About the

same that the verdant Moses had with the venerable old gentleman, his father's friend, at the fair, when he traded the Vicar's pony for the green spectacles. But how could he believe it? how *could* he believe that that stuttering, grammarless Georgian, who had never heard of the resolutions of '98, could beat him in a land trade? "Have no money dealings with my father," said the friendly Martha to Lord Nigel, "for, idiot though he seems, he will make an ass of thee." What a pity some monitor, equally wise and equally successful with old Trapbois' daughter, had not been at the elbow of every Virginian! "Twad frae monie a blunder free'd him—an' foolish notion."

If he made a bad bargain, how could he expect to get rid of it? *He* knew nothing of the elaborate machinery of ingenious chicane,—such as feigning bankruptcy—fraudulent conveyances—making over to his wife —running property—and had never heard of such tricks of trade as sending out coffins to the graveyard, with negroes inside, carried off by sudden spells of imaginary disease, to be "resurrected," in due time, grinning, on the banks of the Brazos.

The new philosophy, too, had commended itself to his speculative temper. He readily caught at the idea of a new spirit of the age having set in, which rejected the saws of Poor Richard as being as much out of date as his almanacs. He was already, by the great rise of property, compared to his condition under the old-times prices, rich; and what were a few thousands of debt, which two or three crops would pay off, compared to the value of his estate? (He never thought that the value of property might come down, while the debt was a fixed fact.) He lived freely, for it was a liberal time, and liberal fashions were in vogue, and it was not for a Virginian to be behind others in hospitality and liberality. He required credit and security, and, of course, had to stand security in return. When the crash came, and no "accommodations" could be had, except in a few instances, and in those on the most ruinous terms, he fell an easy victim. They broke by neighborhoods. They usually endorsed for each other, and when one fell—like the child's play of putting bricks on end at equal distances, and dropping the first in the line against the second, which fell against the third, and so on to the last—all fell; each got broke as security, and yet few or none were able to pay their own debts! So powerless of

protection were they in those times, that the witty H. G. used to say they reminded him of an oyster, both shells torn off, lying on the bench, with the sea-gulls screaming over them; the only question being, which should "gobble them up."

There was one consolation—if the Virginian involved himself like a fool, he suffered himself to be sold out like a gentleman. When his card house of visionary projects came tumbling about his ears, the next question was, the one Webster plagiarized—"Where am I to go?" Those who had fathers, uncles, aunts, or other like dernier resorts, in Virginia, limped back with feathers moulted and crestfallen, to the old stamping ground, carrying the returned Californian's fortune of ten thousand dollars—six bits in money, and the balance in experience. Those who were in the condition of the prodigal (barring the father, the calf—the fatted one I mean —and the fiddle), had to turn their accomplishments to account; and many of them, having lost all by eating and drinking, sought the retributive justice from meat and drink, which might at least, support them in poverty. Accordingly, they kept tavern, and made a barter of hospitality, a business, the only disagreeable part of which was receiving the money, and the only one I know of for which a man can eat and drink himself into qualification. And while I confess I never knew a Virginian, out of the State, to keep a bad tavern, I never knew one to draw a solvent breath from the time he opened house, until death or the sheriff closed it.

Others again got to be not exactly overseers, but some nameless thing, the duties of which were nearly analogous, for some more fortunate Virginian, who had escaped the wreck, and who had got his former boon companion to live with him on board, or other wages, in some such relation that the friend was not often found at table at the dinings given to the neighbors, and had got to be called Mr. Flournoy instead of Bob, and slept in an outhouse in the yard, and only read the *Enquirer* of nights and Sundays.

Some of the younger scions that had been transplanted early, and stripped of their foliage at a tender age, had been turned into birches for the corrective discipline of youth. Yes; many, who had received academical or collegiate educations, disregarding the allurements of the highway —turning from the gala-day exercise of ditching—scorning the effemi-

nate relaxation of splitting rails—heroically led the Forlorn Hope of the battle of life, the corps of pedagogues of country schools—*academies,* I beg pardon for *not* saying; for, under the Virginia economy, every cross-road log-cabin, where boys were flogged from B-k-e-r to Constantinople, grew into the dignity of a sort of runt college; and the teacher vainly endeavored to hide the meanness of the calling beneath the sonorous *sobriquet* of Professor. "Were there no wars?" Had *all* the oysters been opened? Where was the regular army? Could not interest procure service as a deck-hand on a steamboat? Did no stage-driver, with a contract for running at night, through the prairies in midwinter, want help, at board wages, and sweet lying in the loft, when off duty, thrown in? What right had the Dutch Jews to monopolize *all* the peddling? "To such vile uses may we come at last, Horatio." The subject grows melancholy. I had a friend on whom this catastrophe descended. Tom Edmundson was a buck of the first head—gay, witty, dashing, vain, proud, handsome and volatile, and, withal, a dandy and lady's man to the last intent in particular. He had graduated at the University, and had just settled with his guardian, and received his patrimony of ten thousand dollars in money. Being a young gentleman of enterprise, he sought the alluring fields of South-Western adventure, and found them in this State. Before he well knew the condition of his exchequer, he had made a permanent investment of one-half of his fortune in cigars, Champagne, trinkets, buggies, horses, and current expenses, including some small losses at poker, which game he patronized merely for amusement; and found that it diverted him a good deal, but diverted his cash much more. He invested the balance, on private information kindly given him, in *"Choctaw Floats";* a most lucrative investment it would have turned out, but for the facts: 1. That the Indians never had any title; 2. The white men who kindly interposed to act as guardians for the Indians did not have the Indian title; and 3dly, the land, left subject to entry, if the "Floats" had been good, was not worth entering. "These imperfections off its head," I know of no fancy stock I would prefer to a "Choctaw Float." "Brief, brave, and glorious" was "Tom's young career." When Thomas found, as he did shortly, that he had bought five thousand dollars' worth of moonshine, and had no title to it, he honestly informed his landlord of the state of his "fiscality,"

and that worthy kindly consented to take a new buggy, at half price, in payment of the old balance. The horse, a nick-tailed trotter, Tom had raffled off; but omitting to require cash, the process of collection resulted in his getting the price of one chance—the winner of the horse magnanimously paying his subscription. The rest either had gambling offsets, or else were not prepared just at any one particular, given moment, to pay up, though always ready, generally and in a general way.

Unlike his namesake, Tom and his landlady were not—for a sufficient reason—very gracious; and so, the only common bond, Tom's money, being gone, Tom received "notice to quit" in regular form.

In the hurly-burly of the times, I had lost sight of Tom for a considerable period. One day, as I was travelling over the hills in Greene, by a cross-road, leading me near a country mill, I stopped to get water at a spring at the bottom of a hill. Clambering up the hill, after remounting, the summit of it brought me to a view, on the other side, through the bushes, of a log country school-house, the door being wide open, and who did I see but Tom Edmundson, dressed as fine as ever, sitting back in an arm-chair, one thumb in his waistcoat armhole, the other hand brandishing a long switch or rather pole. As I approached a little nearer, I heard him speak out: "Sir—Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia, was the author of the Declaration of Independence—mind that. I thought everybody knew that—even the Georgians." Just then he saw me coming through the bushes and entering the path that led by the door. Suddenly he broke from the chair of state, and the door was slammed to, and I heard some one of the boys, as I passed the door, say—"Tell him he can't come in—the master's sick." This is the last I ever saw of Tom. I understand he afterwards moved to Louisiana, where he married a rich French widow, having first, however, to fight a duel with one of her sons, whose opposition couldn't be appeased, until some such expiatory sacrifice to the manes of his worthy father was attempted; which failing, he made rather a *lame* apology for his zealous indiscretion—the poor fellow could make no other —for Tom had unfortunately fixed him for visiting his mother on crutches the balance of his life.

One thing I will say for the Virginians—I never knew one of them,

under any pressure, to extemporize a profession. The sentiment of reverence for the mysteries of medicine and law was too large for a deliberate quackery; as to the pulpit, a man might as well do his starving without the hypocrisy.

But others were not so nice. I have known them to rush, when the wolf was after them, from the counting-house or the plantation, into a doctor's shop or a law office, as if those places were the sanctuaries from the avenger; some pretending to be doctors that did not know a liver from a gizzard, administering medicine by the guess, without knowing enough of pharmacy to tell whether the stuff exhibited in the big-bellied blue, red and green bottles at the show-windows of the apothecaries' shops, was given by the drop or the half-pint.

Divers others left, but what became of them, I never knew any more than they know what becomes of the sora after frost.

Many were the instances of suffering; of pitiable misfortune, involving and crushing whole families; of pride abased; of honorable sensibilities wounded; of the provision for old age destroyed; of the hopes of manhood overcast; of independence dissipated, and the poor victim without help, or hope, or sympathy, forced to petty shifts for a bare subsistence, and a ground-scuffle, for what in happier days, he threw away. But there were too many examples of this sort for the expenditure of a useless compassion; just as the surgeon after a battle, grows case-hardened, from an excess of objects of pity.

My memory, however, fixes itself on one honored exception, the noblest of the noble, the best of the good. Old Major Willis Wormley had come in long before the *new era*. He belonged to the old school of Virginians. Nothing could have torn him from the Virginia he loved, as Jacopi Foscari, Venice, but the marrying of his eldest daughter, Mary, to a gentleman of Alabama. The Major was something between, or made of about equal parts, of Uncle Toby and Mr. Pickwick, with a slight favor of Mr. Micawber. He was the soul of kindness, disinterestedness and hospitality. Love to everything that had life in it, burned like a flame in his large and benignant soul; it flowed over in his countenance, and glowed through every feature, and moved every muscle in the frame it animated. The

Major lived freely, was rather corpulent, and had not a lean thing on his plantations; the negroes, the dogs, the horses, the cattle, the very chickens, wore an air of corpulent complacency, and bustled about a good-humored rotundity. There was more laughing, singing and whistling at "Hollywood," than would have set up a dozen Irish fairs. The Major's wife had, from a long life of affection, and the practice of the same pursuits, and the indulgence of the same feelings and tastes, got so much like him, that she seemed a feminine and modest edition of himself. Four daughters were all that remained in the family—two had been married off—and they had no son. The girls ranged from sixteen to twenty-two, fine, hearty, whole-souled, wholesome, cheerful lasses, with constitutions to last, and a flow of spirits like mountain springs—not beauties, but good housewife girls, whose open countenances, and neat figures, and rosy cheeks, and laughing eyes, and frank and cordial manners, made them, at home, abroad, on horseback or on foot, at the piano or discoursing on the old English books, or Washington Irving's *Sketch Book,* a favorite in the family ever since it was written, as entertaining and as well calculated to fix solid impressions on the heart, as any four girls in the country. The only difficulty was, they were so much alike, that you were put to fault which to fall in love with. They were all good housewives, or women, rather. But Mrs. Wormley, or Aunt Wormley, as we called her, was as far ahead of any other woman in that way, as could be found this side of the Virginia border. If there was anything good in the culinary line that she couldn't make, I should like to know it. The Major lived on the main stage road, and if any decently dressed man ever passed the houe after sundown, he escaped by sheer accident. The house was greatly visited. The Major knew everybody, and everybody near him knew the Major. The stage-coach couldn't stop long, but in the hot summer days, about noon, as the driver tooted his horn at the top of the red hill, two negro boys stood opposite the door, with trays of the finest fruit, and a pitcher of cider for the refreshment of the wayfarers. The Major himself being on the look-out, with his hands over his eyes, bowing—as he only could bow —vaguely into the coach, and looking wistfully, to find among the passengers an acquaintance whom he could prevail upon to get out and stay a week with him. There wasn't a poor neighbor to whom the Major had

not been as good as an insurer, without premium, for his stock, or for his crop; and from the way he rendered the service, you would think he was the party obliged—as he was.

This is not, in any country I have ever been in, a money-making business; and the Major, though he always made good crops, must have broke at it long ago, but for the fortunate death of a few Aunts, after whom the girls were named, who, paying their several debts of nature, left the Major the means to pay his less serious, but still weighty obligations.

The Major—for a wonder, being a Virginian—had no partisan politics. He could not have. His heart could not hold any thing that implied a warfare upon the thoughts or feelings of others. He voted all the time for his friend, that is, the candidate living nearest to him, regretting, generally, that he did not have another vote for the other man.

It would have done a Camanche Indian's heart good to see all the family together—grand-children and all—of a winter evening, with a guest or two, to excite sociability a little—not company enough to embarrass the manifestations of affection. Such a concordance—as if all hearts were attuned to the same feelings—the old lady knitting in the corner—the old man smoking his pipe opposite—both of their fine faces radiating in the pauses of the laugh, the jest, or the caress, the infinite satisfaction within.

It was enough to convert an abolitionist, to see the old Major when he came home from a long journey of two days to the country town; the negroes running in a string to the buggy; this one to hold the horse, that one to help the old man out, and the others to inquire how he was; and to observe the benignity with which—the kissing of the girls and the old lady hardly over—he distributed a piece of calico here, a plug of tobacco there, or a card of *town* ginger-bread to the little snow-balls that grinned around him; what was given being but a small part of the gift, divested of the kind, cheerful, rollicking way the old fellow had of giving it.

The Major had given out his autograph (as had almost everybody else) as endorser on three several bills of exchange, of even tenor and date, and all maturing at or about the same time. His friend's friend failed to pay as he or his firm agreed, the friend himself did no better, and the Major, before he knew any thing at all of his danger, found a writ served

upon him, and was told by his friend that he was dead broke, and all he could give him was his sympathy; the which, the Major as gratefully received as if it was a legal tender and would pay the debt. The Major's friends advised him he could get clear of it; that notice of protest not having been sent to the Major's post-office, released him; but the Major wouldn't hear of such a defence, he said *his* understanding was, that he was to pay the debt if his friend didn't; and to slip out of it by a quibble, was little better than pleading the gambling act. Besides, what would the lawyers say? And what would be said by his old friends in Virginia, when it reached their ears, that he had plead want of notice, to get clear of a debt, when everybody knew it was the same thing as if he had got notice. And if this defence were good at law, it would not be in equity; and if they took it into chancery, it mattered not what became of the case, the property would all go, and he never could expect to see the last of it. No, no; he would pay it, and had as well set about it at once.

The rumor of the Major's condition spread far and wide. It reached old N. D., "an angel," whom the Major had "entertained," and one of the few that ever travelled that road. He came, post haste, to see into the affair; saw the creditor; made him, upon threat of defence, agree to take half the amount and discharge the Major; advanced the money, and took the Major's negroes—except the house-servants—and put them on his Mississippi plantation to work out the debt.

The Major's heart pained him at the thought of the negroes going off; he couldn't witness it; though he consoled himself with the idea of the discipline and exercise being good for the health of sundry of them who had contracted sedentary diseases.

The Major turned his house into a tavern—that is, changed its name, put up a sign, and three weeks afterwards, you couldn't have told that any thing had happened. The family were as happy as ever—the Major never having put on airs of arrogance in prosperity, felt no humiliation in adversity; the girls were as cheerful, as bustling, and as light-hearted as ever, and seemed to think of the duties of hostesses as mere bagatelles, to enliven the time. The old Major was as profluent of anecdotes as ever, and never grew tired of telling the same ones to every new guest; and yet, the Major's anecdotes were all of Virginia growth, and not one of

them under the legal age of twenty-one. If the Major had worked his negroes as he had those anecdotes, he would have been able to pay off the bills of exchange without any difficulty.

The old lady and the girls laughed at the anecdotes, though they must have heard them at least a thousand times, and knew them by heart; for the Major told them without the variations; and the other friends of the Major laughed too; indeed, with such an air of thorough benevolence, and in such a truly social spirit did the old fellow proceed "the tale to unfold," that a Cassius-like rascal that wouldn't laugh, whether he saw anything to laugh at or not, ought to have been sent to the Penitentiary for life—half of the time to be spent in solitary confinement.

THE HARP of a THOUSAND STRINGS

WILLIAM P. BRANNAN

This famous burlesque sermon was reprinted in the Spirit of the Times, *N. Y., 1855 September 29, p. 387, prefaced with the following remarks by the editor, Wm. T. Porter, "We find the following in a New Orleans paper. Where they picked it up, we should like to know. It is one of the most unique 'Sarmons' we ever read, and it may be a long time before our readers are treated to 'another such.' So 'dip in,' gentlemen. The scene is laid in the town of Waterproof." Watterson in his* Oddities *gives the source as a Brandon, Mississippi, newspaper but gives no data.*

Unquestionably this was one of the greatest burlesque sermons in American humor. It was used effectively by Alf Burnett, the comic character delineator, before the Union Armies and was one of the most popular comic pieces in the Army camps. Burlesque sermons as a form of American humor became popular as early as 1840 when "Dow, Jr." (E. F. Paige) began a series of "Dow's Patent Sermons" in the New York Sunday Mercury *of that date. These were first collected in book form in 1841; and enlarged editions were published by Peterson's in Philadelphia, 1857, in four volumes.*

THE HARP of a THOUSAND STRINGS

WILLIAM P. BRANNAN

I MAY SAY to yo, my brethering, that I am not an edecated man, an' I am not one o' them that beleeves edecation is necessary for a gospel minister, fur I beleeve the Lord edecates his preachers jest as he wants 'em to be edecated; and although I say it that ought n't to say it, yet in the State of Indianny, whar I live, thar's no man as gits a bigger congregation nor what I gits.

"Thar may be some here to-day, my brethering, as don't know what persuasion I am uv. Well, I may say to you, my brethering, that I am a Hard-Shell Baptist. Thar's some folks as don't like the Hard-Shell Baptists, but I'd rather hev a hard shell as no shell at all. You see me here to-day, my brethering, dressed up in fine close; you mout think I was proud, but I am not proud, my brethering; and although I've been a preacher uv the gospel for twenty years, and although I'm capting uv that flat-boat that lies at your landing, I'm not proud, my brethering.

"I'm not gwine ter tell you *edzackly* whar my tex may be found: suffice it tu say, it's in the leds of the Bible, and you'll find it somewhar 'tween the fust chapter of the book of Generation, and the last chapter of the book of Revolutions, and ef you'll go and sarch the Scripturs,

you'll not only find *my* tex thar, but a great many other *texes* as will do you good to read; and my tex, when you shill find it, you shill find it to read thus:

" 'And he played on a harp uv a thousand strings—sperits of just men made perfeck.'

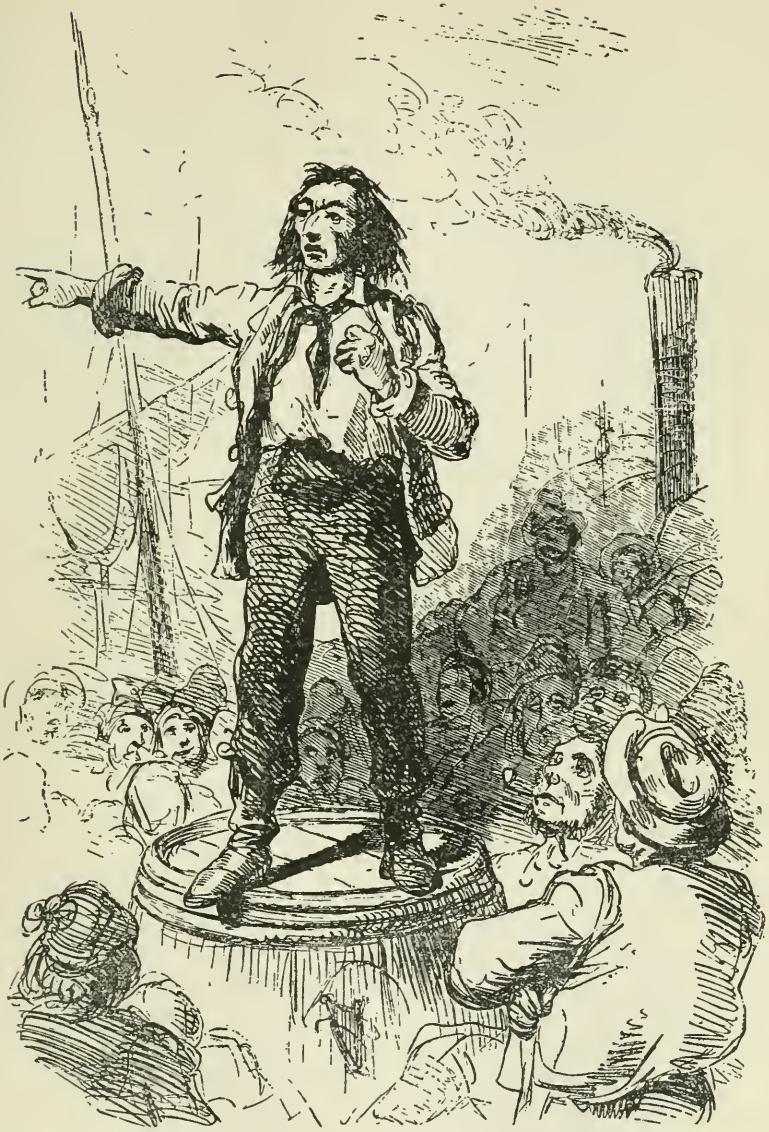
"My tex, brethren, leads me to speak uv sperits. Now thar's a great many kind of sperits in the world—in the fust place, thar's the sperits as som folks call ghosts; then thar's the sperits uv turpen*time;* and then thar's the sperits as some folks call liquor, and I've got as good artikel uv them kind uv sperits on my flat-boat as ever was fotched down the Mississippi River; but thar's a great many other kind of sperits, for the tex says: 'He played on a harp uv a *thou*-sand strings—sperits of just men made perfeck.'

"But I'll tell you the kind of sperits as is ment in the tex: it's *fire.* That is the kind of sperits as is ment in the tex, my brethering. Now thar's a great many kinds of fire in the world. In the fust place, thar's the common sort uv fire you light a segar or pipe with, and then thar's camfire, fire before you're ready to fall back, and many other kinds uv fire, for the tex ses: 'He played on a harp uv a *thou*-sand strings—sperits uv just men made perfeck.'

"But I'll tell you the kind of fire as is ment in the tex, my brethering —it's *hell-fire!* an' that's the kind of fire as a great many of you'll come to, ef you don't do better nor what you have bin doin'—for 'He played on a harp uv a *thou*-sand strings—sperits of just men made perfeck.'

"Now, the different sorts uv fire in the world may be likened unto the different persuasions in the world. In the first place, we have the 'Piscapalions, and they are a high salin' and a highfalutin' set, and they may be likened unto a turkey-buzzard, that flies up into the air, and he goes up and up till he looks no bigger than your finger-nail, and the fust thing you know, he cums down and down, and is a fillin' himself on the karkiss of a dead hoss by the side uv the road—and 'He played on a harp uv a *thou*-sand strings—sperits of just men made perfeck.'

"And then, thar's the Methodis, and they may be likened unto the squirrel, runnin' up into a tree, for the Methodis believes in gwine on from one degree uv grace to another, and finally on to perfecshun; and



the squirrel goes up and up, and he jumps from lim' to lim', and branch to branch, and the fust thing you know, he falls, and down he comes kerflummux; and that's like the Methodis, for they is allers fallin' from Grace, ah! And 'He played on a harp uv a *thou*-sand strings—sperits of just men made perfeck.'

"And then, my brethering, thar's the Baptist, ah! and they hev bin likened unto a possum on a 'simmon tree, and the thunders may roll, and then the earth may quake, but that possum clings there still, ah! And you may shake one foot loose, and the other's thar; and you may shake all feet loose, and he laps his tail around the lim', and he clings fur ever—for 'He played on a harp of a *thou*-sand strings—sperits of just men made perfeck.' "

SIMON SUGGS
Becomes
CAPTAIN

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

From Simon Suggs, *1845, by J. J. Hooper, Chapter 7.*

SIMON SUGGS
Becomes
CAPTAIN

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

BY REFERENCE to memoranda, contemporaneously taken, of incidents to be recorded in the memoirs of Captain Suggs, we find that we have reached the most important period in the history of our hero—his assumption of a military command. And we beg the reader to believe, that we approach this portion of our subject with a profound regret at our own incapacity for its proper illumination. Would that thy pen, O! Kendall, were ours! Then would thy hero and ours—the nation's Jackson and the country's Suggs—go down to far posterity, equal in fame and honors, as in deeds! But so the immortal gods have not decreed! Not to Suggs was Amos given! Aye, jealous of his mighty feats, the thundering Jove denied an historian worthy of his puissance! Would that, like Cæsar, he could write himself! Then, indeed, should Harvard yield him honors, and his country—justice!

Early in May of the year of grace—and excessive bank issues—1836, the Creek war was discovered to have broken out. During that month several persons, residing in the county of Tallapoosa, were cruelly murdered by the "inhuman savages"; and an exceedingly large number of the peaceful citizens of the state—men, women and children—excessively frightened. Consternation seized all! "Shrieks inhuman" rent the air!

The more remote from the scenes of blood, the greater the noise. The yeomanry of the country—those to whom, as we are annually told, the nation looks with confidence in all her perils—packed up their carts and wagons, and "incontinently" departed for more peaceful regions! We think we see them now, "strung along the road," a day or two after the intelligence of the massacres below had reached the "settlement" of Captain Suggs! There goes old man Simmons, with his wife and three daughters, together with two feather beds, a few chairs, and a small assortment of pots and ovens, in a cart drawn by a bob-tail, gray pony. On the topmost bed, and forming the apex of this pile of animate and inanimate "luggage," sits the old tom-cat, whom the youngest daughter would not suffer to remain lest he might come to harm. "Who knows," she exclaims, "*what* they might do to the poor old fellow?" On they toil! the old man's head, ever and anon, turned back to see if they are pursued by the remorseless foe; while the wife and daughters scream direfully, every ten minutes, as they discover in the distance a cow or a hog—"Oh, they'll kill us! they'll skelp us! they'll tar us all *to* pieces! Oh, Lord! daddy! Oh, Lord!" But the old tom-cat sits there, gravely and quietly, the very incarnation of tom philosophy!

It was on Sunday that the alarm was sounded in the "Suggs settlement," and most of the neighbours were in attendance upon the "preaching of the word" by brother Snufflenosey, at Poplar Spring meeting-house, when the "runner" who brought the woful tidings, disclosed them at old Tom Rollins', by yelling, as he sat on his horse before the door,—"the Injuns is a-killin every body below! I aint got time to stop! tell the neighbours!" Now, old Mr. Rollins and the "gals" were already at meeting, but the old lady, having staid behind "to fix up a leetle," was, at the identical moment of the messenger's arrival, *en chemise* before a very small glass set in a frame of red paper, preparing to adorn her person with divers new articles of apparel, inclusive of a new blue-and-red-calico gown. But no sooner did her mind comprehend the purport of the words from without, than she sprang out of the house, "accoutred as she was," shrieking at every bound, "the Injuns! the Injuns!"—nor stopped until with face, neck, and bosom crimson as a strutting gobbler's snout, she burst into the meeting-house, and having once more screamed

"the Injuns!" fell exhausted, at full length, upon the floor. "Will any of the breethring lend me a horse?" asked the Reverend Mr. Snufflenosey, wildly, as he bounded out of the pulpit, in very creditable style—"Wont *none* of you lend me one?" he repeated emphatically; and obtaining no answer, dashed off precipitately afoot! Then went up to Heaven the screams of fifty frightened women, in one vast discord, more dreadful than the war-squalls of an hundred cats in fiercest battle. Men, too, looked pale and trembled; while, strange to relate, all of the dozen young babies in attendance silently dilated their astonished eyes—struck utterly dumb at being so signally beaten at their own peculiar game!

At length an understanding was somehow effected, that Taylor's store, five miles thence, should be the place of rendezvous, for that night at least; and then Mr. Snufflenosey's congregation tumbled itself forth as expeditiously as was possible.

Simon was "duly" at the store with his family, when the wagon, cart, and pony loads of "badly-scared" mortality began to arrive in the afternoon. He was there of course, and he was in his element. Not that Suggs is particularly fond of danger—albeit, he is a hero—but because he delighted in the noise and confusion, the fun and the free drinking, incident to such occasions. And he enjoyed these to the uttermost now, because he was well informed as to the state of feeling of the Indians, in all the country for ten miles around, and knew there was no danger. But Simon did not disclose this to the terrified throng at the store. Not he! Suggs was never the man to destroy his own importance in that sort of way. On the contrary, he magnified the danger, and endeavoured to impress upon the minds of the miscellaneous crowd "then and there" assembled, that he, Simon Suggs, was the only man at whose hands they could expect a deliverance from the imminent peril which impended.

"Gentle*men,*" said he impressively, "this here is a critercle time; the wild savage of the forest are beginnin' of a bloody, hostile war, which they're not a-goin' to spar nither age nor sek—not even to the women and children!"

"Gracious Lord above! what *is* a body to do!" exclaimed the portly widow Haycock, who was accounted wealthy, in consideration of the

fact that she had a hundred dollars in money, and was the undisputed owner of one entire negro—"we shall all be skelped, and our truck all burnt up and destr'yed! What shall we do!"

"That's the question," remarked Simon, as he stooped to draw a glass of whiskey from a barrel of that article—the only thing on sale in the "store"—"that's the question. Now, as for you women-folks"—here Suggs dropped a lump of brown sugar in his whiskey, and began to stir it with his finger, looking intently in the tumbler, the while—"as for you women-folks, it's plain enough what *you*'ve got to do"—here Simon tasted the liquor and added a little more sugar—"plain *enough!* You've only got to look to the Lord and hold your jaws; for that's all you *kin* do! But what's the 'sponsible *men"*—taking his finger out of the tumbler, and drawing it through his mouth—"of this crowd to do? The inemy will be down upon us right away, and before mornin' "—Simon drank half the whiskey—"blood will flow like—like"—the Captain was bothered for a simile, and looked around the room for one, but finding none, continued—"like all the world! Yes, like all the world"—an idea suggested itself—"and the Tallapussey river! It'll pour out," he continued, as his fancy got rightly to work, "like a great guljin ocean!—d—d ef it don't!" And then Simon swallowed the rest of the whiskey, threw the tumbler down, and looked around to observe the effect of this brilliant exordium.

The effect was tremendous!

Mrs. Haycock clasped her hands convulsively, and rolled up her eyes until the "whites" only could be seen. Old Mrs. Rollins—who by this time was fully clothed—and her two daughters had what Simon termed the "high-strikes" in one corner of the room, and kicked up their heels at a prodigious rate; while in another, a group of young women hugged one another most affectionately, sobbing hysterically all the time. Old granny Gilbreth sat in the middle of the floor, rocking her body back and forth, striking the palms of her hands on the planks as she bent forward, and clapping them together as she re-attained the perpendicular.

"My apinion," continued Simon, as he stooped to draw another tumbler of whiskey; "my apinion, folks, is this here. We ought to form a company right away, and make some man capting that aint afeard to fight—mind what I say now—*that—aint—afeard—to—fight!*—some so-

ber, stiddy feller"—here he sipped a little from the tumbler—"that's a good hand to manage women and keep 'em from hollerin—which they're a-needin' somethin' of the sort most damdibly, and I eech to git holt o' that one a-making that devilish racket in the corner, thar"—the noise in the corner was suddenly suspended—"and more'n all, a man that's acquainted with the country and the ways of the Injuns!" Having thus spoken, Suggs drank off the rest of the whiskey, threw himself into a military attitude, and awaited a reply.

"Suggs is the man," shouted twenty voices.

"Keep close to *him,* and you'll never git hurt," said a diminutive, yellow-faced, spindle-legged young man.

"D'ye think so now?" exclaimed Simon furiously, as he "planted" a tremendous kick on that part of the joker's person at which the boot's point is most naturally directed. "D'ye think so now? Take *that* along, and next time keep your jaw, you slink, or I'll kick more clay outen you in a minute, than you can eat again in a month, you durned, little, dirt-eatin' deer-face!"

"Keep the children outen the way," said the little fellow, as he lay sprawling in the farthest corner of the room; "ef you don't, *Cap'en* Suggs will whip 'em all. He's a sight on children and people what's got the *yaller janders!*"

Simon heeded not the sarcasm, but turning to the men he asked—

"Now gentle*men,* who'll you have for capting?"

"Suggs! Suggs! Suggs!" shouted a score and a half of masculine voices.

The women said nothing—only frowned.

"Gentle*men,*" said Simon, a smile of gratified, but subdued pride playing about his mouth; "Gentle*men,* my respects—ladies, the same to you!" —and the Captain bowed—"I'm more'n proud to sarve my country at the head of sich an independent and patriotic cumpany! Let who will run, gentle*men,* Simon Suggs will allers be found sticking thar, like a tick onder a cow's belly—"

"Whar do you aim to bury your dead Injuns, Cap'en?" sarcastically inquired the little dirt-eater.

"I'll bury *you,* you little whifflin fice," said Captain Suggs in a rage; and he dashed at yellow-legs furiously.

"Not afore a body's dead, I reckon," replied the dirt-eater, running round the room, upsetting the women and trampling the children, in his efforts to escape. At last he gained the door, out of which he bounced and ran off.

"Durn the little cuss," said the Captain, when he saw that pursuit would be useless; "I oughtent to git aggrawated at him, no how. He's a poor signifiken runt, that's got the mark of the huckle-berry ponds on his legs yit, whar the water come to when he was a-getherin' 'em, in his raisin' in Northkurliny. But I must put a stop to sich, and that right away"; and striding to the door, out of which he thrust his head, he made proclamation: "Oh yes! gentle*men!* Oh yes! This here store-house and two acres all round is now onder *martial law!* If any man or woman don't mind my orders, I'll have 'em shot right away; and children to be whipped accordin' to size. By order of me, Simon Suggs, Capting of the" —the Captain paused.

"Tallapoosy Vollantares," suggested Dick Cannifax.

"The Tallapoosy Vollantares," added Suggs, adopting the suggestion; "so let every body look out, and walk the chalk!"

Thus was formed the nucleus of that renowned band of patriot soldiers, afterwards known as the "FORTY THIEVES"—a name in the highest degree inappropriate, inasmuch as the company, from the very best evidence we have been able to procure, never had upon its roll, at any time, a greater number of names than *thirty-nine!*

As became a prudent commander, Captain Suggs, immediately after the proclamation of martial law, set about rendering his position as strong as possible. A rude rail fence near by was removed and made to enclose the log store, and another building of the same sort, which was used as a stable. The company was then paraded, and a big drink dealt out to each man, and five men were detailed to serve as sentinels, one at each corner of the enclosure, and one at the fence in front of the store door. The Captain then announced that he had appointed Andy Snipes, "fust lewtenant," Bird Stinson "sekkunt ditto," and Dave Lyon "sarjunt."

The guard was set, the women summarily quieted, the mass of the company stowed away in the stable for the night; and the Captain and "Lewtenant Snipes" sat down, with a bottle of bald-face between them, to a

social game of "six cards, seven up," by a fire in the middle of the enclosure. About this time, the widow Haycock desired to possess herself of a certain "plug" of tobacco, wherewithal to supply her pipe during the watches of the night. The tobacco was in her cart, which, with a dozen others, stood in the road twenty steps or so from the front door. Now, as the widow Haycock was arrayed rather grotesquely—in a red-flannel wrapper, with a cotton handkerchief about her head—she did not wish to be seen as she passed out. She therefore noiselessly slipped out, and, the sentinel having deserted his post for a few moments to witness the playing between his officers, succeeded in reaching her cart unobserved. As she returned, however, with the weed of comfort in her hand, she was challenged by the sentinel, who, hearing a slight noise, had come back to his post.

"Stand!" said he, as the old lady was climbing the fence.

"Blessed Master!" exclaimed Mrs. Haycock; but the soldier was too much frightened to observe that she spoke English, or to recognize her voice.

"Give the counter-sign or I'll shoot," said he, bringing his gun to a "present," but receding towards the fire as he spoke.

Instead of the counter-sign, Mrs. Haycock gave a scream, which the sentinel, in his fright, mistook for the war-whoop, and instantly fired. The widow dropped from the fence to the ground, on the outside, and the sentinel ran to the Captain's fire.

In a moment was heard the thundering voice of Captain Suggs:

"Turn out, men! Kumpny fo-r-m!"

The women in the store screamed, and the company formed immediately in front of the door. The Captain was convinced that the alarm was a humbug of some sort; but keeping up the farce, kept up his own importance.

"Bring your guns to a level with your breasts, and fire through the cracks of the fence!" he ordered.

An irregular volley was fired, which brought down a pony and a yoke of steers, haltered to their owner's carts in the road; and frightened "yellow-legs" (who had slyly taken lodgings in a little wagon) nearly to death.

"Over the fence now. Hooraw! my galyunt voluntares!" shouted the Captain, made enthusiastic by the discharge of the guns.

The company scaled the fence.

"Now charge baggonets! Hooraw! Let 'em have the cold steel, my brave boys!"

This manœuvre was executed admirably, considering the fact, that the company was entirely without bayonets or a foe. The men brought their pieces to the proper position, ran ten steps, and finding nothing else to pierce, drove the long, projecting ram-rods of their rifles deep in the mellow earth!

"Pickle all them skelps, Cap'en Suggs, or they'll *spile!"* said a derisive voice, which was recognized as belonging to Yellow-legs, and a light form flitted from among the wagons and carts, and was lost in the darkness.

"Somebody kill that critter!" said Suggs, much excited. But the "critter" had "evaporated."

A careful examination of the field of battle was now made, and the protrate bodies of the pony, the oxen, and the widow Haycock discovered, lying as they had fallen. From the last a slight moaning proceeded. A light was soon brought.

"What's the matter, widder—hurt?" inquired Suggs, raising up one of Mrs. Haycock's huge legs upon his foot, by way of ascertaining how much life was left.

"Only dead—that's all," said the widow as her limb fell heavily upon the ground, with commendable resignation.

"Pshaw!" said Suggs, "you aint bad hurt. Whar-abouts did the bullet hit?"

"All over! *only* shot to pieces! It makes *no* odds tho'—kleen through and through—I'm a-goin' mighty fast!" replied the widow, as four stout men raised her from the ground and carried her into the house, where her wounds were demonstrated to consist of a contusion on the bump of philo-progenitiveness, and the loss of a half square inch of the corrugated integument of her left knee.

Captain Suggs and Lieutenant Snipes now resumed their game.

"Lewtenant,"—said Suggs, as he dealt the cards—"we must—there's the tray for low—we must *court-martial* that old 'oman in the mornin'."

" 'Twon't do, Capting—the tray I mean—to be sure we must! She's vierlated the rules of war!"

"And Yaller-legs, *too!*" said Suggs.

"Yes, yes; and Yaller-legs too, ef we kin ketch him," replied Lewtenant Snipes.

"Yes, d—d ef I don't!—court-martial 'em both, as sure as the sun rises —*drum-head* court-martial at that!"

WHERE THE LION ROARETH
and the
WANG-DOODLE MOURNETH

WILLIAM P. BRANNAN

From The Harp of a Thousand Strings (*copyr. 1858*), *a collection of humorous yarns and verse, edited by S. P. Avery.*

WHERE THE LION ROARETH and the WANG-DOODLE MOURNETH

WILLIAM P. BRANNAN

My beloved Brethering: I am a unlarnt Hard-Shell Baptist preacher, of whom you've no doubt hearn afore, and I now appear here to expound the scripters and pint out the narrow way which leads from a vain world to the streets of Jaroosalem; and my tex which I shall choose for the occasion is in the leds of the Bible, somewhar between the Second Chronik-ills and the last chapter of Timothytitus; and when you find it, you'll find it in these words: "And they shall gnaw a file, and flee unto the mountains of Hepsidam, where the lion roareth and the wang-doodle mourneth for his first-born."

Now, my brethering, as I have before told you, I am an oneddicated man, and know nothing about grammer talk and collidge highfalutin, but I am a plane unlarnt preacher of the Gospil, what's been foreordaned and called to prepare a pervarse generashun for the day of wrath—ah! "For they shall gnaw a file, and flee unto the mountains of Hepsidam, whar the lion roareth and the wang-doodle mourneth for his first-born" —ah!

My beloved brethering, the tex says they shall gnaw a file. It does not say they *may,* but shall. Now, there is more than one kind of file. There's the hand-saw file, the rat-tail file, the single file, the double file, and pro-

file; but the kind spoken of here isn't one of them kind nayther, bekaws it's a figger of speech, and means going it alone and getting ukered; "for they shall gnaw a file, and flee unto the mountains of Hepsidam, whar the lion roareth and the wang-doodle mourneth for its first-born" —ah!

And now there be some here with fine close on thar backs, brass rings on thar fingers, and lard on thar har, what goes it while they're yung; and thar be others here what, as long as thar constitooshins and forty-cent whiskey last, goes it blind. Thar be sisters here what, when they gets sixteen years old, cut thar tiller-ropes and goes it with a rush. But I say, my dear brethering, take care you don't find, when Gabriel blows his last trump, your hand's played out, and you've got ukered—ah! "For they shall gnaw a file, and flee unto the mountains of Hepsidam, whar the lion roareth and the wang-doodle mourneth for his first-born."

Now, my brethering, "they shall flee unto the mountains of Hepsidam"; but thar's more dams than Hepsidam. Thar's Rotter-dam, Haddam, Amster-dam, and "Don't-care-a-dam"—the last of which, my brethering, is the worst of all, and reminds me of a sirkumstans I onst knowed in the state of Illenoy. There was a man what built him a mill on the north fork of Ager Crick, and it was a good mill and ground a sight of grain; but the man what built it was a miserable sinner, and never give anything to the church; and, my dear brethering, one night there came a dreadful storm of wind and rain, and the mountains of the great deep was broke up, and the waters rushed down and swept that man's mill-dam to kingdom cum, and when he woke up he found that he wasn't worth a dam—ah! "For they shall gnaw a file, and flee unto the mountains of Hepsidam, whar the lion roareth and the wang-doodle mourneth for his first-born"—ah!

I hope I don't hear any body larfin; do I?

Now, "whar the lion roareth and the wang-doodle mourneth for his first-born"—ah! This part of my tex, my beseaching brethering, is not to be taken as it says. It don't mean the howling wilderness, whar John the Hard-Shell Baptist fed on locusts and wild asses, but it means, my brethering, the city of New Y'Orleans, the mother of harlots and hard lots, whar corn is wuth six bits a bushel one day and nary a red the nex;

whar niggers are as thick as black bugs in spiled bacon ham, and gamblers, thieves, and pickpockets goes skiting about the streets like weasels in a barn-yard; whar honest men are scarcer than hen's teeth; and whar a strange woman once took in your beluved teacher, and bamboozled him out of two hundred and twenty-seven dollars in the twinkling of a sheep's-tail; but she *can't* do it again! Hallelujah—ah! "For they shall gnaw a file, and flee unto the mountains of Hepsidam, whar the lion roareth and the wang-doodle mourneth for his first-born"—ah!

My brethering, I am the captain of that flat-boat you see tied up thar, and have got aboard of her flour, bacon, taters, and as good Mononga-hela whiskey as ever was drunk, and am mighty apt to get a big price for them all; but what, my dear brethering, would it all be wuth if I hadn't got religion? Thar's nothing like religion, my brethering: it's better nor silver or gold gimcracks; and you can no more get to heaven without it, than a jay-bird can fly without a tail—ah! Thank the Lord! I'm an oned-dicated man, my brethering; but I've sarched the Scripters from Dan to Beersheba, and found Zion right side up, and hard-shell religion the best kind of religion—ah! 'Tis not like the Methodists, what specks to get to heaven by hollerin' hell-fire; nor like the Univarsalists, that get on the broad gage and goes the hull hog—ah!; nor like the Yewnited Brethering, that takes each other by the slack of thar breeches and hists themselves in; nor like the Katherliks, that buys threw tickets from their priests; but it may be likened unto a man what has to cross the river—ah! —and the ferry-boat was gone; so he tucked up his breeches and waded acrost—ah! "For they shall gnaw a file, and flee unto the mountains of Hepsidam, whar the lion roareth and the wang-doodle mourneth for his first-born!"

Pass the hat, Brother Flint, and let every Hard-Shell Baptist shell out.

THE FIGHT

A. B. LONGSTREET

From Georgia Scenes, *1835, by A. B. Longstreet. Poe's comment on* The Fight *was, "Although involving some horrible and disgusting details of Southern barbarity it is a sketch unsurpassed in dramatic vigor, and in the vivid truth to nature." Poe,* Southern Literary Messenger, *March 1836.*

THE FIGHT

A. B. LONGSTREET

IN THE younger days of the Republic there lived in the county of —— two men who were admitted on all hands to be the very *best men* in the county, which in the Georgia vocabulary means they could flog any other two men in the county. Each, through many a hard-fought battle, had acquired the mastery of his own battalion; but they lived on opposite sides of the court-house and in different battalions, consequently they were but seldom thrown together. When they met, however, they were always friendly; indeed, at their first interview they seemed to conceive a wonderful attachment to each other, which rather increased than diminished as they became better acquainted; so that, but for the circumstance which I am about to mention, the question, which had been a thousand times asked, "Which is the best man, Billy Stallions (Stallings) or Bob Durham?" would probably never have been answered.

Billy ruled the upper battalion and Bob the lower. The former measured six feet and an inch in his stockings, and, without a single pound of cumbrous flesh about him, weighed a hundred and eighty. The latter was an inch shorter than his rival, and ten pounds lighter; but he was much the more active of the two. In running and jumping he had but

few equals in the county; and in wrestling, not one. In other respects they were nearly equal. Both were admirable specimens of human nature in its finest form. Billy's victories had generally been achieved by the tremendous power of his blows, one of which had often proved decisive of his battles; Bob's by his adroitness in bringing his adversary to the ground. This advantage he had never failed to gain at the onset, and when gained he never failed to improve it to the defeat of his adversary. These points of difference have involved the reader in a doubt as to the probable issue of a contest between them. It was not so, however, with the two battalions. Neither had the least difficulty in determining the point by the most natural and irresistible deductions *a priori;* and though, by the same course of reasoning, they arrived at directly opposite conclusions, neither felt its confidence in the least shaken by this circumstance. The upper battalion swore "that Billy only wanted one lick at him to knock his heart, liver, and lights out of him, and if he got two at him he'd knock him into a cocked hat." The lower battalion retorted "that he wouldn't have time to double his fist before Bob would put his head where his feet ought to be; and that, by the time he hit the ground, the meat would fly off his face so quick that people would think it was shook off by the fall." These disputes often led to the *argumentum ad hominem,* but with such equality of success on both sides as to leave the main question just where they found it. They usually ended, however, in the common way—with a bet; and many a quart of old Jamaica (whiskey had not then supplanted rum) was staked upon the issue. Still, greatly to the annoyance of the curious, Billy and Bob continued to be good friends.

Now, there happened to reside in the county just alluded to a little fellow by the name of Ransy Sniffle: a sprout of Richmond, who, in his earlier days, had fed copiously upon red clay and blackberries. This diet had given to Ransy a complexion that a corpse would have disdained to own, and an abdominal rotundity that was quite unprepossessing. Long spells of the fever and ague, too, in Ransy's youth, had conspired with clay and blackberries to throw him quite out of the order of nature. His shoulders were fleshless and elevated; his head large and flat; his neck slim and translucent; and his arms, hands, fingers, and feet were length-

ened out of all proportion to the rest of his frame. His joints were large and his limbs small; and as for flesh, he could not, with propriety, be said to have any. Those parts which nature usually supplies with the most of this article—the calves of the legs, for example—presented in him the appearance of so many well-drawn blisters. His height was just five feet nothing; and his average weight in blackberry season, ninety-five. I have been thus particular in describing him, for the purpose of showing what a great matter a little fire sometimes kindleth. There was nothing on this earth which delighted Ransy so much as a fight. He never seemed fairly alive except when he was witnessing, fomenting, or talking about a fight. Then, indeed, his deep-sunken gray eye assumed something of a living fire, and his tongue acquired a volubility that bordered upon eloquence. Ransy had been kept for more than a year in the most torturing suspense as to the comparative manhood of Billy Stallings and Bob Durham. He had resorted to all his usual expedients to bring them in collision, and had entirely failed. He had faithfully reported to Bob all that had been said by the people in the upper battalion "agin him," and "he was sure Billy Stallings started it. He heard Billy say himself to Jim Brown that he could whip him, *or any other man in his battalion";* and this he told to Bob, adding, "Dod darn his soul, if he was a little bigger, if he's let any man *put upon* his battalion in such a way!" Bob replied, "If he (Stallings) thought so, he'd better come and try it." This Ransy carried to Billy, and delivered it with a spirit becoming his own dignity and the character of his battalion, and with a coloring well calculated to give it effect. These and many other schemes which Ransy laid for the gratification of his curiosity entirely failed of their object. Billy and Bob continued friends, and Ransy had begun to lapse into the most tantalizing and hopeless despair, when a circumstance occurred which led to a settlement of the long-disputed question.

It is said that a hundred game-cocks will live in perfect harmony together if you do not put a hen with them; and so it would have been with Billy and Bob had there been no women in the world. But there were women in the world, and from them each of our heroes had taken to himself a wife. The good ladies were no strangers to the prowess of their husbands, and, strange as it may seem, they presumed a little upon it.

The two battalions had met at the court-house upon a regimental parade. The two champions were there, and their wives had accompanied them. Neither knew the other's lady, nor were the ladies known to each other. The exercises of the day were just over, when Mrs. Stallings and Mrs. Durham stepped simultaneously into the store of Zephaniah Atwater, from "down East."

"Have you any Turkey red?" said Mrs. S.

"Have you any curtain calico?" said Mrs. D. at the same moment.

"Yes, ladies," said Mr. Atwater, "I have both."

"Then help me first," said Mrs. D., "for I'm in a hurry."

"I'm in as great a hurry as she is," said Mrs. S., "and I'll thank you to help me first."

"And, pray, who are you, madam?" continued the other.

"Your betters, madam," was the reply.

At this moment Billy Stallings stepped in. "Come," said he, "Nancy, let's be going; it's getting late."

"I'd 'a' been gone half an hour ago," she replied, "if it hadn't 'a' been for that impudent hussy."

"Who do you call an impudent hussy, you nasty, good-for-nothing, snaggle-toothed gaub of fat, you?" returned Mrs. D.

"Look here, woman," said Billy. "Have you got a husband here? If you have, I'll *lick* him till he learns to teach you better manners, you *sassy* heifer you!"

At this moment something was seen to rush out of the store as if ten thousand hornets were stinging it, crying, "Take care—let me go—don't hold me—where's Bob Durham?" It was Ransy Sniffle, who had been listening in breathless delight to all that had passed.

"Yonder's Bob, setting on the court-house steps," cried one. "What's the matter?"

"Don't talk to me!" said Ransy. "Bob Durham, you'd better go long yonder and take care of your wife. They're playing h—l with her there in Zeph Atwater's store. Dod etarnally darn my soul, if any man was to talk to my wife as Bill Stallions is talking to yours, if I wouldn't drive blue blazes through him in less than no time!"

Bob sprang to the store in a minute, followed by a hundred friends; for a bully of a county never wants friends.

"Bill Stallions," said Bob, as he entered, "what have you been saying to my wife?"

"Is that your wife?" inquired Billy, obviously much surprised and a little disconcerted.

"Yes, she is; and no man shall abuse her, I don't care who he is."

"Well," rejoined Billy, "it ain't worth while to go over it; I've said enough for a fight, and if you'll step out we'll settle it."

"Billy," said Bob, "are you for a fair fight?"

"I am," said Billy. "I've heard much of your manhood, and I believe I'm a better man than you are. If you will go into a ring with me we can soon settle the dispute."

"Choose your friends," said Bob; "make your ring, and I'll be in with mine as soon as you will!"

They both stepped out, and began to strip very deliberately, each battalion gathering round its champion, except Ransy, who kept himself busy in a most honest endeavor to hear and see all that transpired in both groups at the same time. He ran from one to the other in quick succession; peeped here and listened there; talked to this one, then to that one, and then to himself; squatted under one's legs and another's arms; and, in the short interval between stripping and stepping into the ring, managed to get himself trod on by half of both battalions. But Ransy was not the only one interested upon this occasion; the most intense interest prevailed everywhere. Many were the conjectures, doubts, oaths, and imprecations uttered while the parties were preparing for the combat. All the knowing ones were consulted as to the issue, and they all agreed, to a man, in one of two opinions—either that Bob would flog Billy, or Billy would flog Bob. We must be permitted, however, to dwell for a moment upon the opinion of Squire Thomas Loggins, a man who, it was said, had never failed to predict the issue of a fight in all his life. Indeed, so unerring had he always proved in this regard that it would have been counted the most obstinate infidelity to doubt for a moment after he had delivered himself. Squire Loggins was a man who said but

little, but that little was always delivered with the most imposing solemnity of look and cadence. He always wore the aspect of profound thought, and you could not look at him without coming to the conclusion that he was elaborating truth from its most intricate combinations.

"Uncle Tommy," said Sam Reynolds, "you can tell us all about it if you will; how will the fight go?"

The question immediately drew an anxious group around the squire. He raised his teeth slowly from the head of his walking-cane, on which they had been resting, pressed his lips closely and thoughtfully together, threw down his eyebrows, dropped his chin, raised his eyes to an angle of twenty-three degrees, paused about half a minute, and replied, "Sammy, watch Robert Durham close in the beginning of the fight, take care of William Stallions in the middle of it, and see who has the wind at the end." As he uttered the last sentence he lookely slyly at Bob's friends and winked very significantly; whereupon they rushed, with one accord, to tell Bob what Uncle Tommy had said. As they retired, the squire turned to Billy's friends and said, with a smile, "Them boys think I mean that Bob will ship."

Here the other party kindled into joy, and hastened to inform Billy how Bob's friends had deceived themselves as to Uncle Tommy's opinion. In the meantime the principals and seconds were busily employed in preparing themselves for the combat. The plan of attack and defence, the manner of improving the various turns of the conflict, "the best mode of saving wind," etc., etc., were all discussed and settled. At length Billy announced himself ready, and his crowd were seen moving to the centre of the Court-house Square, he and his five seconds in the rear. At the same time Bob's party moved to the same point, and in the same order. The ring was now formed, and for a moment the silence of death reigned through both battalions. It was soon interrupted, however, by the cry of "Clear the way!" from Billy's seconds, when the ring opened in the centre of the upper battalion (for the order of march had arranged the centre of the two battalions on opposite sides of the circle), and Billy stepped into the ring from the east, followed by his friends. He was stripped to the trousers, and exhibited an arm, breast, and shoulders of the most tremendous portent. His step was firm, daring, and martial; and

as he bore his fine form a little in advance of his friends an involuntary burst of triumph broke from his side of the ring, and at the same moment an uncontrollable thrill of awe ran along the whole curve of the lower battalion.

"Look at him!" was heard from his friends; "just look at him!"

"Ben, how much you ask to stand before that man two seconds?"

"Pshaw, don't talk about it! Just thinkin' about it's broke three o' my ribs a'ready!"

"What's Bob Durham going to do when Billy lets that arm loose upon him?"

"God bless your soul, he'll think thunder and lightning a mint-julep to it!"

"Oh, look here, men, go take Bill Stallions out o' that ring, and bring in Phil Johnson's stud-horse, so that Durham may have some chance! I don't want to see the man killed right away."

These and many other like expressions, interspersed thickly with oaths of the modern coinage, were coming from all points of the upper battalion, while Bob was adjusting the girth of his pantaloons, which walking had discovered not to be exactly right. It was just fixed to his mind, his foes becoming a little noisy, and his friends a little uneasy at his delay, when Billy called out, with a smile of some meaning, "Where's the bully of the lower battalion? I'm getting tired of waiting."

"Here he is!" said Bob, lighting as it seemed from the clouds into the ring, for he had actually bounded clear of the head of Ransy Sniffle into the circle. His descent was quite as imposing as Billy's entry, and excited the same feelings, but in opposite bosoms.

Voices of exultation now rose on his side.

"Where did he come from?"

"Why," said one of his seconds (all having just entered), "we were girting him up, about a hundred yards out yonder, when he heard Billy ask for the bully, and he fetched a leap over the court-house and went out of sight; but I told them to come on, they'd find him here."

Here the lower battalion burst into a peal of laughter, mingled with a look of admiration which seemed to denote their entire belief of what they had heard.

"Boys, widen the ring, so as to give him room to jump."

"Oh, my little flying wild-cat, hold him if you can! and, when you get him fast, hold lightning next."

"Ned, what do you think he's made of?"

"Steel springs and chicken-hawk, God bless you!"

"Gentlemen," said one of Bob's seconds, "I understand it is to be a fair fight—catch as catch can, rough and tumble; no man touch till one or the other halloos."

"That's the rule," was the reply from the other side.

"Are you ready?"

"We are ready."

"Then blaze away, my game-cocks!"

At the word, Bob dashed at his antagonist at full speed, and Bill squared himself to receive him with one of his most fatal blows. Making his calculation from Bob's velocity of the time when he would come within striking distance, he let drive with tremendous force. But Bob's onset was obviously planned to avoid this blow; for, contrary to all expectations, he stopped short just out of arm's reach, and before Billy could recover his balance Bob had him "all under-hold." The next second, sure enough, "found Billy's head where his feet ought to be." How it was done no one could tell; but, as if by supernatural power, both Billy's feet were thrown full half his own height in the air, and he came down with a force that seemed to shake the earth. As he struck the ground, commingled shouts, screams, and yells burst from the lower battalion, loud enough to be heard for miles. "Hurrah, my little hornet!" "Save him!" "Feed him!" "Give him the Durham physic till his stomach turns!" Billy was no sooner down than Bob was on him, and lending him awful blows about the face and breast. Billy made two efforts to rise by main strength, but failed. "Lord bless you, man, don't try to get up! *Lay* still and take it! You *bleege* to have it!"

Billy now turned his face suddenly to the ground, and rose upon his hands and knees. Bob jerked up both his hands and threw him on his face. He again recovered his late position, of which Bob endeavored to deprive him as before; but, missing one arm, he failed, and Billy rose. But he had scarcely resumed his feet before they flew up as before, and

he came agin to the ground. "No fight, gentlemen!" cried Bob's friends; "the man can't stand up! Bouncing feet are bad things to fight in." His fall, however, was this time comparatively light; for, having thrown his right arm round Bob's neck, he carried his head down with him. This grasp, which was obstinately maintained, prevented Bob from getting on him, and they lay head to head, seeming, for a time, to do nothing. Presently they rose, as if by mutual consent; and as they rose a shout burst from both battalions. "Oh, my lark!" cried the east, "has he foxed you? Do you begin to feel him! He's only beginning to fight; he ain't got warm yet."

"Look yonder!" cried the west. "Didn't I tell you so? He hit the ground so hard it jarred his nose off. Now ain't he a pretty man as he stands? He shall have my sister Sal, just for his pretty looks. I want to get in the breed of them sort o' men, to drive ugly out of my kinfolks."

I looked, and saw that Bob had entirely lost his left ear and a large piece from his left cheek. His right eye was a little discolored, and the blood flowed profusely from his wounds.

Bill presented a hideous spectacle. About a third of his nose, at the lower extremity, was bit off, and his face so swelled and bruised that it was difficult to discover in it anything of the human visage, much more the fine features which he carried into the ring.

They were up only long enough for me to make the foregoing discoveries, when down they went again, precisely as before. They no sooner touched the ground than Bill relinquished his hold upon Bob's neck. In this he seemed to all to have forfeited the only advantage which put him upon an equality with his adversary. But the movement was soon explained. Bill wanted this arm for other purposes than defence; and he had made arrangements whereby he knew that he could make it answer these purposes; for when they rose again he had the middle finger of Bob's left hand in his mouth. He was now secure from Bob's annoying trips; and he began to lend his adversary tremendous blows, every one of which was hailed by a shout from his friends: "Bullets!" "*Hoss*-kicking!" "Thunder!" "That'll do for his face; now feel his short ribs, Billy!"

I now considered the contest settled. I deemed it impossible for any human being to withstand for five seconds the loss of blood which issued

from Bob's ear, cheek, nose, and finger, accompanied with such blows as he was receiving. Still he maintained the conflict, and gave blow for blow with considerable effect. But the blows of each became slower and weaker after the first three or four; and it became obvious that Bill wanted the room which Bob's finger occupied for breathing. He would therefore, probably, in a short time, have let it go, had not Bob anticipated his politeness by jerking away his hand and making him a present of the finger. He now seized Bill again, and brought him to his knees, but he recovered. He again brought him to his knees, but he again recovered. A third effort, however, brought him down, and Bob on top of him. These efforts seemed to exhaust the little remaining strength of both; and they lay, Bill undermost and Bob across his breast, motionless and panting for breath. After a short pause Bob gathered his hand full of dirt and sand and was in the act of grinding it in his adversary's eyes when Bill cried, "Enough!" Language cannot describe the scene that followed—the shouts, oaths, frantic gestures, taunts, replies, and little fights —and therefore I shall not attempt it. The champions were borne off by their seconds and washed; when many a bleeding wound and ugly bruise was discovered on each which no eye had seen before.

Many had gathered round Bob, and were in various ways congratulating and applauding him, when a voice from the centre of the circle cried out, "Boys, hush, and listen to me!" It proceeded from Squire Loggins, who had made his way to Bob's side, and gathered his face up into one of its most flattering and intelligible expressions. All were obedient to the squire's command. "Gentlemen," continued he, with a most knowing smile, "is—Sammy Reynolds—in—this—company—of—gentlemen?"

"Yes," said Sam, "here I am."

"Sammy," said the squire, winking to the company and drawing the head of his cane to his mouth with an arch smile as he closed, "I—wish—you—to tell—Cousin—Bobby—and—these—gentlemen here present—what—your—Uncle—Tommy—said—before—the—fight—began?"

"Oh, get away, Uncle Tom," said Sam, smiling (the squire winked), "you don't know nothing about *fighting.*" (The squire winked again.) "All you know about it is how it'll begin, how it'll go on, how it'll end;

that's all. Cousin Bob, when you going to fight again, just go to the old man, and let him tell you all about it. If he can't, don't ask nobody else nothing about it, I tell you."

The squire's foresight was complimented in many ways by the by-standers; and he retired, advising "the boys to be at peace, as fighting was a bad business."

Durham and Stallings kept their beds for several weeks, and did not meet again for two months. When they met, Billy stepped up to Bob and offered his hand, saying, "Bobby, you've *licked* me a fair fight; but you wouldn't have done it if I hadn't been in the wrong. I oughtn't to have treated your wife as I did; and I felt so through the whole fight; and it sort o' cowed me."

"Well, Billy," said Bob, "let's be friends. Once in the fight, when you had my finger in your mouth, and was pealing me in the face and breast, I was going to halloo; but I thought of Petsy, and knew the house would be toc hot for me if I got whipped when fighting for her, after always whipping when I fought for myself."

"Now that's what I always love to see," said a by-stander. "It's true I brought about the fight, but I wouldn't have done it if it hadn't 'a' been on account of *Miss* (Mrs.) Durham. But dod etarnally darn my soul if I ever could stand by and see any woman put upon, much less *Miss* Durham! If Bobby hadn't been there I'd 'a' took it up myself, be darned if I wouldn't, even if I'd 'a' got whipped for it! But we're all friends now." The reader need hardly be told that this was Ransy Sniffle.

HALL.

COL. HAWKINS
and
THE COURT

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

From Widow Rugby's Husband,
1851, by J. J. Hooper. See Introduction.

COL. HAWKINS and THE COURT

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

SOME YEARS ago, I knew an individual whose *sobriquet* was "Col. Hawkins," and who was the most perfect specimen of the dare-devil frontier-man, that I ever saw, at least in Alabama. His real name was Jim Fielder—to which his neighbours frequently added the expressive prefix "Devil." And he *was* a devil, fearing neither God, man, nor beast, and if not invulnerable, possessing at least a tenacity of life that was most astonishing. He had been once struck down with a broadaxe, and his brain absolutely cloven to a considerable depth, and for several inches in length; yet he made no particular difficulty of surviving, and that, too, with all his faculties uninjured.

The "Colonel" being what, in his region and times, was called a cow-driver, had cultivated the art of equitation, until he and his favourite bay, whom he named "Hell," had become a perfect centaur. No feat was too difficult for them. I have seen them myself do things which would make the gallant Col. May's blood run cold. Hell was the most perfectly trained animal that I ever saw; followed his master like a dog, and when the Colonel got drunk and lay in the road, would stand by him and guard him for hours.

"Col. Hawkins" used to be very fond of attending the circuit courts of

his county, at which, after a time, he became an insufferable nuisance. The sheriffs were always afraid of him; the tavern-keepers dreaded him; and the judge never could get hold of him. In one of his mad freaks, I have seen him, while court was in session, mounted on "Hell," charge up to the steps, and in to one door of the court-house, dash furiously along the aisle, and, with a tremendous leap, clear the steps out of the other.

I remember well the first session at which I ever saw him. Court was held, temporarily, in a two-story wooden building; one end of which rested on the ground; the other (the front) being on brick-work, or blocks, two or three feet high. A judge was presiding, whose distinguishing trait was a tyrannical petulance—a judicial wasp, whose sting was ever protruding. His Honour, however, met his match in "Col. Hawkins," and, no doubt, thinks of him to this day with emotions of horror.

For the first day or two of the court, our hero, being rather sober, behaved remarkably well; but about the middle of the week he got on a regular frolic, and immediately turned his attention to the disturbance of the court. For this purpose, he had prepared a number of loaves of bread, and collecting all the scraps of the kitchen of his tavern, he proceeded to "fort" himself *under* the court-house. His citadel was impregnable on one side, by reason of the house having one end on the ground; and all the other approaches the Colonel industriously fortified by building walls of large rocks, leaving only a single entrance, and a few port-holes through which he might cast his missiles at any adventurous besieger.

Here it must be remarked, that the town was particularly populous *in the dog way*—if that be not a solecism—and Jim being aware of the fact, had provided himself with a hunting horn, an instrument on which he was a most capital performer. There were in the village, at the time, I think, three full packs of hounds; and as to the curs, though I never took *their* census, I can certify that they were multitudinous.

Prepared now, at all points, the Colonel took his place within his "fort," and waited until a sound of bustling from above indicated that the court was transacting business. Then, *toot, toot, to-too, to-too—toot, toot, toot!* went his horn.

Three "several and distinct" simultaneous howls from different quarters of the town responded to the blast!

Toot! toot! to-too! to-too! toot! toot! toot!

Again three dire howls responded; but this time they seemed converging to a common centre—Jim's *subcurian* fortification.

"My God, Mr. Sheriff," said the little tiger on the bench, "what is all that blowing and howling about?"

"I s'pose," replied the Sheriff, with a wild look, for he knew the Tartar he had to deal with "I s'pose it's a comp'ny of hunters going out after deer."

"W*a*l"—the judge invariably sounded the *e* in *well, a* short—"Wal, my God! do the hunters in this country *hunt on the public square?"*

Toot! toot! toot! to-to-to-to-to-hoot! went Jim's horn again; and the hounds, with a multitude of their half-brethren "of low degree," having by this time assembled under the house, sent up a long, a loud, and a most deafening response. Jim then gave them all some bread and meat scraps, in token of their approval. He then blew another "blast," and again fifty or sixty canine throats belched forth the hideous sounds!

"My God! Mr. Sheriff, I fine you ten dollars," said the irritated Judge —"Go and stop that noise."

The Sheriff went down, and having ascertained the strength of the Colonel's position, endeavoured to coax him out.

"Come out, Jim, old fellow, and I'll stand a treat; I will, by George!"

"Toot! toot!" was the reply; and then the howl from the dogs, who began "to let themselves out."

The Judge fined the first deputy, up stairs, five dollars, for the new attack upon his nerves.

Several adventurous special deputies at length went under, to take our hero "by storm"; but they very soon returned with bruised heads and defiled clothing. Jim, with inimitable *sang froid,* held the horn to his mouth with one hand, while with the other he sent his rocks with terrible effect at his assailants. His allies, too, the dogs, gave him occasional sly assistance, by nibbling at the more exposed parts of the persons of the invaders; and these being obliged to go "upon all-fours," under the house, these "attacks in the rear" were in the highest degree vexatious and unpunishable.

Toot! toot! toot!
Howl! howl! howl!

The contagion spread to the crowd assembled on the public square,

"And each—for madness ruled the hour—
Would try his own expressive pow'r."

Yell after yell went up from the crowd! All was confusion; and as peal after peal of the odd and mingled discord floated up, roar after roar of unsuppressed laughter shook the court-room!

The Judge was pale with rage. Every fibre of his frame trembled with excitement; but he could only fine—so he fined the Sheriff an hundred dollars for reporting the Colonel's fort impregnable, himself invincible, and his forces determined to stand to him, *to a dog!* He then adjourned court, "until the nuisance could be abated."

As soon as the Colonel perceived that he had stopped all legal proceedings, he suspended his blasts, and dealt out double rations to his forces. From one of the port-holes in front, observing that the Judge was strolling about on the square, and that the Sheriff was consulting with a dozen or so of his friends, he watched his opportunity, horn in hand, he slipped out, unperceived except by friends, and reached his steed, which was tied in the bushes near by. Mounting "Hell," he "blew a blast so loud and long," that every hound responded at once, and in a moment more, dashed in upon the square, with his followers in full cry! Here he went, "like mad," now clearing an old woman and her cake-stand at a jump, and now bounding lightly over a group of a half dozen on a fallen log. Ye gods! how the crowd scattered! Espying the Judge, he dashed up to him—circled round him, in Cumanchee style, and blowing his horn the while, evoked the most hideous howls from his troop! Round and round he dashed—the judge petrified in the centre, pawed, mouthed, and smelt of by the hounds, and stunned—overpowered, by their hideous din! Never before (I speak metaphorically) was the ermine so villanously defiled!

Having accomplished his purpose of "bedeviling" a Judge, who had the reputation of being a martinet, Jim retreated, in good order, from the square to the thicket at the back of the court-house. He knew what would

follow, and fully prepared for it. He had procured him a whiskey-barrel, *minus* one head, and, a foot or so above the bung-hole, had cut an opening about six inches in diameter. By small cords he had attached to the outside of the barrel two large bundles of fodder, a fragment of old stove-pipe, and three superannuated coffee-pots.

As soon as Jim had left the square, the Judge ordered the Sheriff to summon a *posse,* and take him, at all risks—and the Sheriff instantly summoned twenty or thirty of the hundreds who had horses hitched on the square, and ordered them into line to receive his directions. The Judge borrowed a pony, to go along and see his mandate executed.

Jim, who had been watching their operations slily, as soon as they seemed nearly complete, blew a blast, mounted "Hell," and drawing the barrel up after him, placed it over himself; and taking the reins through the hole, rode leisurely on, till in view of the Sheriff's squad, when, with a loud toot, a howl from his dogs, the rustling of his fodder, the clangour of his coffee pots, and the sonorous *gong*-notes of his stove-pipe, he charged at full speed upon the Sheriff and his *posse comitatus!*

Talk of *May!* Talk of *Murat!* There was never a charge so reckless or effective as Jim Fielder's charge upon the sheriff and his squad.

Toot! toot! toot! bang! clang! bang! howl! howl! howl! and he was in their midst! The horses of the squad, maddened with fright, reared and plunged, and either threw their riders, or dashed off with them precipitately from the field. The horses hitched about at racks and trees participated in the panic, and in five seconds there was a universal *stampede.*

The Judge's pony dashed off with a speed that was highly creditable to his short legs and Indian origin; and after *him* the Colonel dashed, with all his dreadful din, in full blast! On, on, on! at a killing lick! Down, down the hill to the old tan-yard!—where suddenly Judge and pony had a "tight fit" in an ancient, but not inodorous vat!

Satisfied—almost—with his victory, our hero charged back to town—putting to flight everything equine, of which he came in view, and leaping his horse into the piazza of a grocery, pitched his barrel through the window upon the head, and other frangible property of the proprietor—like lightning passed in at one door and out at another— and whooping at the top of his voice, rode furiously out of town.

A COON-HUNT in a FENCY COUNTRY

WILLIAM T. THOMPSON

From Polly Peablossom's Wedding,
1851, edited by T. A. Burke.

A COON-HUNT in a FENCY COUNTRY

WILLIAM T. THOMPSON

'TIS REALLY astonishin what a monstrous sight of mischief there is in a pint of rum. If one of 'em was to be submitted to an analization, as the doctors call it, it would be found to contain all manner of devilment that ever entered the hed of man, from cussin and stealin up to murder and whippin his own mother, and nonsense enuff to turn all the men in the world out of their senses. If a man's got any badness in him, it'll bring it out jest as sassafras tea does the measles, and if he's a good for nothin sort of a feller, without no bad traits in pertikeler, it'll bring out all his greenness. It affects different people in different ways—it makes some men monstrous brave and full of fight, and some it makes cowards—some it makes rich and happy, and some poor and miserable; and it has a different effect on different people's eyes—some it makes see double, and some it makes so blind that they can't tell themselves from a side of bacon. One of the worst cases of rum-foolery that I've heard for a long time, tuk place in Pineville last fall.

Bill Sweeney and Tom Culpepper is the two greatest old coveys in our settlement for coon-huntin. The fact is, they don't do much of anything else, and when *they* can't ketch nothin you may depend coons is scarce. Well, one night they had everything reddy for a regular hunt, but owin

to some extra good fortin, Tom had got a pocket-pistol, as he called it, of reglar old Jimmakey, to keep off the rumatics. After taking a good startin horn, they went out on their hunt, with their lite-wood torch a blazin, and the dogs a barkin and yelpin like forty thousand. Evry now and then stoppin to wait for the dogs, they would drink one another's helth, till they begun to feel very comfortable, and chatted away bout one thing and another, without mindin much which way they was gwine. Bimeby they cum to a fence. Well, over they got, 'thout much difficulty.

"Who's fence is this?" ses Bill.

" 'Taint no matter," ses Tom, "let's take suthin to drink."

After takin a drink they went on, wonderin what on yearth had cum of the dogs. Next thing they cum to a terrible muddy branch.[1] After pullin through the briers and gettin on tother side, they tuck another drink, and after gwine a little ways they cum to another branch, and a little further they cum to another fence—a monstrous high one this time.

"Whar upon yearth is we got to, Culpepper?" ses Bill, "I never seed sich a heap of branches and fences in these parts."

"Why," ses Tom, "it's all old Sturlin's doins—you know he's always bildin fences and making infernal improvements, as he calls 'em. But never mind—we's through them now."

"Guess we is," ses Bill; "here's the all-firedest tall fence yet."

Shure enuff, thar they was right agin another fence. By this time, they begun to be considerable tired and limber in the gints, and it was sich a terrible high fence—Tom drapped the last piece of the torch, and thar they was in the dark.

"Now you is done it," ses Bill.

Tom know'd he had, but he thought it was no use to grieve over spilled milk, so ses he, "Never mind, old hoss—cum ahead, and I'll take you out," and the next minit kerslash he went into the water.

Bill hung on to the fence with both hands like he thought it was slewin round to throw him off.

"Hellow, Tom," ses he, "whar in the world is you got to?"

[1] Branch. "A brook. Almost every stream in the South is known either as a river, a bayou, or a *branch, bayou* being synonyms with creek, and *branch* with brook." Bartlett, J. B., *Dictionary of Americanisms,* second edition, 1859, p. 47.

"Here I is," ses Tom, spoutin the water out of his mouth, and coffin like he'd swallowed something. "Look out, thar's another branch here."

"Name a' sense, whar is we?" ses Bill. "If this isn't a fency country, dad fetch my buttons."

"Yes, and a branchy one, too!" ses Tom; "and the highest, and deepest, and thickest that I ever seed in my born days."

"Which way is you?" ses Bill.

"Here, rite over the branch."

The next minite in Bill went, up to his middle in the branch.

"Cum ahead," ses Tom, "let's go home."

"Cum thunder! in such a place as this, whar a man hain't more'n got his cote tail unhitched from a fence, fore he's over his head and ears in the water."

After gettin out and feelin about in the dark a little, they got together agin. After takin another drink, they sot out for home, denouncin the fences and the branches, and helpin one another up now and then; but they hadn't got more'n twenty yards fore they brung up all standin in the middle of another branch. After gettin thro' the branch and gwine about ten steps, they was brung to a halt by another fence.

"Dad blame my pictur," ses Bill, "if I don't think we is bewitched. Who upon yearth would bild fences all over creation this way?"

It was but a ower's job to get over this one, but after they got on the top they found the ground on tother side 'thout much trouble. This time the bottle was broke, and they come monstrous near having a fight about the catastrofy. But it was a very good thing, it was, for after crossin two or three more branches, and climbin as many more fences, it got to be daylight, and they found out that *they had been climbin the same fence all night,* not more'n a hundred yards from whar they first cum to it.

Bill Sweeney ses he can't account for it no other way but that the licker sort o' turned their heads, and he says he does really believe if it hadn't gin out they'd been climbin that same fence, and wadin that same branch till yet. Bill promised his wife to jine the Temperance Society if she won't never say no more bout that Coon-Hunt.

A QUARTER RACE in KENTUCKY

"COL. PETE WHETSTONE"

This gay sporting yarn appeared originally in the Spirit of the Times, *N. Y., 1836, and was one of the earliest of the humorous sketches of its kind to appear in that journal. The authorship has been attributed to "Col. Pete Whetsone" (C. F. M. Noland), but the evidence is not clear. Information bearing on authorship desired. Wm. T. Porter furnished the clue that the author was "a planter, breeder and turfman of North Alabama," 1845.*

A QUARTER RACE
in
KENTUCKY

"COL. PETE WHETSTONE"

NOTHING WOULD start against the Old Mare; and after more formal preparation in making weight and posting judges than is customary when there is a contest, *"the sateful old kritter"* went off crippling as if she was not fit to run for sour cider, and any thing could take the shine out of her that had the audacity to try it. The muster at the stand was slim, it having been understood up town, that as to sport to-day the races would prove a *water-haul*. I missed all that class of old and young gentlmen who annoy owners, trainers, and riders, particularly if they observe they are much engaged, with questions that should not be asked, and either can't or should not be answered. The business folks and men of gumption were generally on the *grit,* and much of the chaff certainly had been blown off.

A walk or gallop over is a slow affair; and without being in any way able to account for it, it seemed to be an extremely dry affair; for while the four mile was *being* done (*as the prigs have it*) I noticed many a centaur of a fellow force his skeary nag up to the opening in the little clapboard shanty and shout out impatiently—"Colonel, let us have some of your *byled* corn—pour me out a buck load—there—never mind about the water, I drank a heap of it yesterday," and then wheel off to the crowd as if intent on something.

The race, like all things, had an end, and I had some idea, in imitation of Sardanapalus, "all in one day to see the race, then go home, eat, drink, and be merry, for all the rest was not worth a fillip," when I met Dan. He knows a little, finds out a little, and guesses the rest, and, of course, is prime authority. I inquired if the hunt was up. "Oh, no, just hold on a while, and there will be as bursting a quarter race as ever was read of, and I will give it 'em, so you can make expenses." I always make a hand when about, and thinking I might get a wrinkle by prying into the mystery of quarter-racing, I accordingly rode to the thickest of the crowd. A rough-hewn fellow, who either was, or pretended to be, drunk, was bantering to run his mare against any horse that had ploughed as much that season, his mare having, as he assured us, tended twenty-five acres in corn. Another chap sidled up to him, and offered to plough against him for as much liquor as the company could drink, or for who should have both nags—his horse had never run, as he did not follow it. Sorrel got mad, and offered to beat him in the car, wagon or plough, or he could beat him running one hundred miles, his weight on each, for five hundred dollars. Bay still disclaimed racing, but would run the quarter stretch, to amuse the company, for one hundred dollars. Sorrel took him up, provided Bay carried his present rider, and he would get somebody; Bay agreed, provided he would not get a lighter rider. It was closed at that, and two of Senator Benton's abominations—$100 United States Bank Bills—were planked up. Bay inquired if they could stand another $50;—agreed to by Sorrel, who, observing Bay shell out a $100 note, said, there was no use of making change, as his note was the same amount, and they might as well go the $100. This was promptly agreed to, and another one hundred dollars offered, and immediately covered—there being now three hundred dollars a side. Now came proposal to increase it three hundred dollars more; Bay said—"You oversize my pile, but if I can borrow the money, I'll accommodate you," and immediately slipped off to consult his banker. Dan now whispered, *"Spread yourself on the Bay."* Thinking I should run in while I was hot, I observed aloud —I should admire to bet some gentleman ten dollars on the bay. A Mr. Wash, or as he was familiarly called, Big Wash, snapped me up like a duck does a June-bug, by taking the bill out of my hand, and observing

that either of us could hold the stakes, put it in his pocket. Finding this so easily done, I pushed off to consult my friend Crump, the most knowing man about short races I ever knew, and one who can see as far into a millstone as the man that pecks it. I met him with the man that made the race on the bay, coming to get a peep at the sorrel. As soon as he laid eyes on her he exclaimed—

"Why, Dave, you made a pretty pick up of it; I'm afraid our *cake is all dough*—that's old Grapevine, and I told you point blank to walk round her, but you're like a member of the Kentucky legislature, who admitted that if he had a failing it was being a *leetle* too brave."

"How could I know Grapevine," replied Dave, doggedly; "and you told me you could beat her, any how."

"Yes," said Crump, "I think I can; but I didn't come a hundred and fifty miles to run them kind of races—Old Tompkins has brought her here, and I like him for *sucker!*"

"Well," says Dave, "maybe I can get off with the race if you think you'll be licked."

"No," said Crump, "when I go a catting, I go a catting; its mighty mixed up, and there's no telling who's constable until the election is over; it will be like the old bitch and the rabbit, nip and tuck every jump, and sometimes the bitch a *lettle* ahead."

Old Tompkins, who had not appeared during the making of the race, now came round, and seeing the bay, said—"Popcorn, by G—D." He now came forward, and addressed the other party: "Boys," said he, "it's no use to run the thing into the ground. If a man goes in for betting, I say let him go his load, but we have no ambition against you, so draw the bet to one hundred dollars; that is enough for a little tacky race like this, just made for amusement."—Carried by acclamation.

Now the judges were selected: a *good* judge does not mean exactly the same thing here as on the bench, though some of the same kind may be found there—it means one who is obstinate in going for his own friends. It did not seem to be considered courteous to object to the selections on either side, perhaps from a mutual consciousness of invulnerability. But one of the nominees for the ermine was a hickory over any body's per-

simmon in the way of ugliness. He was said to be undisputed possessor of the celebrated jack-knife; his likeness had been moulded on dog-irons to frighten the children from going too near the fire, and his face ached perpetually; but his eyes! his eyes! He was said to have caught a turkey-buzzard by the neck, the bird being deceived, and thinking he was looking another way; and several of the crowd said he was so cross-eyed he could *look at his own head!* It was objected to him that he could not keep his eyes on the score, as he did not see *straight,* and it was leaving the race to the accident of which of his optics obtained the true bearing when the horses were coming out. The objections were finally overruled, the crooked party contending that Nature had designed him for a quarter judge, as he could station one eye to watch when the foremost horse's toe struck the score, and could note the track of the horse that followed, at the same moment, with the other eye.

The riders now attracted my attention. It is customary, I believe, to call such "a feather," but they seemed to me about the size of a big Christmas turkey gobbler, without feathers; and I was highly delighted with the precocity of the youths—they could swear with as much energy as men of six feet, and they used fourth-proof oaths with a volubility that would bother a congressional reporter.

There now arose a dispute as to whether they should run to or from the stand, it being a part of the mile track, and there being some supposed advantage to one of the horses, or the other, according as this might be arranged. It was determined by a toss-up at last, to run to the stand. After another toss for choice of tracks, and another for the word, the horses walked off towards the head of the stretch. Now it was "Hurra, my Popcorn—I believe in you—come it strong, lumber—go it with a looseness—root, little pig, or die." And, "Oh! my Grapevine! tear the hind sights off him!—you'll lay him out cold as a wagon-tire—roll your bones—go it, you cripples!" &c., &c., &c.

Beginning to doubt, from all I heard, whether my friend Dave had been regularly appointed almanac-maker for this year, I hedged a five, and staked it with a young man that was next me, riding a remarkable wall-eyed horse, and some time after staked another five dollars, with a person I had noticed assisting about the bar, and would be able to recog-

nise again. I now flattered myself on my situation—I had all the pleasurable excitement of wagering, and nothing at risk.

Each side of the track was lined with eager faces, necks elongated, and chins projected, a posture very conducive to health in a bilious climate, as it facilitates the operation of emetics. I was deafened with loud cries of "Clear the track!" "Stand back!" "Get off the fence!" "The riders are mounted!" "They are coming!" "Now they are off!"—but still they came not. Without intending it I found myself, and indeed most of the crowd, moving up towards the start, and after every failure, or false alarm, I would move a few yards. I overhead a fellow telling with great glee—"Well, I guess I warmed the wax in the ears of that fellow with the narrow brimmed white hat; he had an elegant watch that he offered to bet against a good riding-horse. You know my seventeen year old horse, that I always call the bay colt; I proposed to stake him against the watch, and the fellow agreed to it without ever looking in his mouth; if he had, he would have seen teeth as long as tenpenny nails. It is easy fooling any of them New York collectors—they ain't cute: the watch is a bang-up lever, and he says if he was going to travel he would not be without it for any consideration. He made me promise if I won it to let him have it back at one hundred dollars in case he went into Georgia this fall. It is staked in the hands of the Squire there;—Squire, show it to this here entire stranger." The Squire produced a splendid specimen of the tin manufacture; I pronounced it valuable, but thought it most prudent not to mention for what purpose.

Alarms that the horses were coming continued, and I gradually reached the starting place: I then found that Crump, who was to turn Popcorn, had won the word—that is, he was to ask "are you ready?" and if answered "yes!" it was to be a race. Popcorn jumped about like a pea on a griddle, and fretted greatly—he was all over in a lather of sweat. He was managed very judiciously, and every attempt was made to soothe him and keep him cool, though he evidently was somewhat exhausted. All this time Grapevine was led about as cool as a cucumber, an awkward-looking *striker* of Old Thompson's holding her by the cheek of the bridle, with instructions, I presume, *not to let loose in any case,* as he managed adroitly to be turning round whenever Popcorn put the question.

Old Tompkins had been sitting doubled up sideways on his sleepy-looking old horse—it now being near dark—rode slowly off a short distance, and hitched his horse: he deliberately took off his coat, folded it carefully, and laid it on a stump, his neckcloth was with equal care deposited on it, and then his weather-beaten hat; he stroked down the few remaining hairs on his caput, and came and took the mare from his striker. Crump was anxious for a start, as his horse was worsted by delay; and as soon as he saw Grapevine in motion to please her turner, Old Tompkins swung her off ahead, shouting triumphontly, "Go! d—n you!" and away she went with an *ungovernable*. Crump wheeled his horse round before reaching the poles, and opened on Old Tompkins—"That's no way; if you mean to run, let us run, and quit fooling; you should say, 'Yes!' if you mean it to be a race, and then I would have turned loose, had my nag been tail forward; it was no use for me to let go, as it would have been no race any how until you give the word."

Old Tompkins looked as if the boat had left him or like the fellow that was fighting, and discovered that he had been biting his own thumb. He paused a moment, and without trying to raise a squabble (an unusual thing), he broke down the track to his mare, slacked her girths, and led her back, soothing and trying to quiet her. She was somewhat blown by the run, as the little imp on her was not strong enough to take her up soon. They were now so good and so good, and he proposed they should lead up and take a fair start. "Oh!" said Crump, "I thought that would bring you to your milk, so lead up." By this time you could see a horse twenty yards off, but you could not be positive as to his colour. It was proposed to call in candles. The horses were led up, and got off the first trial. "Ready?" "Yes!"—and a fairer start was never made. Away they went in a hurry.

All hands made for the winning post. Here I heard—"Mare's race!" —"No! she crossed over the horse's path!" —"The boy with the shirt rode foul!"—"The horse was ahead when he pasesd me!" After much squabbling, it was admitted by both parties that the nag that came out on the left-hand side of the track was ahead; but they were about equally divided as to whether the horse or the mare came through on the left-

hand side. The judges of the start agreed to give it in as even. When they came down, it appeared that one of the outcome judges got angry, and had gone home an hour ago. My friend that looked so many ways for Sunday, after a very ominous silence, and waiting until frequently appealed to, gave the race to the horse by ten inches. This brought a yell from the crowd, winners and losers, that beat any thing yet; a dozen of men were produced, who were ready to swear that gimblet-eye was a hundred yards off, drinking a stiff cock-tail at the booth, and that he was at the far side of it when the horses came out, and consequently must have judged the result through two pine planks an inch thick; others swore he did not know when the race was won, and was not at the post for five minutes after. Babel was a quiet retired place compared with the little assemblage at this time: some bets were given up, occasional symptoms of a fight appeared, a general examination was going on to be assured the knife was in the pocket, and those hard to open were opened and slipped up the sleeve; the crowd clustered together like a bee-swarm. This continued until about nine o'clock, when Crump, finding he could not get the stakes, compromised the matter, and announced that by agreement it was a drawn race. This was received with a yell louder, if possible, than any former one; every one seemed glad of it, and there was a unanimous adjournment to the bar. Though tired and weary, I confess that I (for no earthly reason that I can give but the force of example) was inclined to join them, when I was accosted by a person with whom I had bet, and had staked in the hands of the young man riding the wall-eyed horse. "Well," said he, "shell out my five dollars that I put up with that friend of yours—as I can't find *him*." I protested that I did not know the young man at all, and stated that he had my stake also. He replied that I need not try to feed him on *soft corn* that way, and called on several persons to prove that I selected the stakeholder, and we were seen together, and we must be acquainted, as we were both *furreigners* from the cut of our coats. He began to talk hostile, and was, as they brag in the timber districts, twenty foot in the clear, without limb, knot, windshake, or woodpecker hole. To appease him, I agreed, if the stakeholder could not be found, to be responsible for his stake. He very indus-

triously made proclamation for the young man with the wall-eyed horse, and being informed that he had *done gone* three hours ago, he claimed of me, and I had to shell out.

Feeling somewhat worsted by this transaction, I concluded I would look up my other bets. Mr. Wash I did not see, and concluded he had retired; I found the stakeholder that assisted about the bar, and claimed my five dollars on the draw race; to my surprise I learned he had given up the stakes. Having been previously irritated, I made some severe remarks, to all of which he replied in perfect good temper, and assured me he was the most punctilious person in the world about such matters, and that it was his invariable rule never to give up stakes except by the direction of some of the judges, and called up proof of his having declined delivering the stakes until he and the claimant went to old screw-eye; and he decided I had lost. This seemed to put the matter out of dispute so far as he was concerned, but thinking I would make an appeal to my opponent, I inquired if he knew him. He satisfied me, by assuring me he did not *know him from a side of sole leather.*

I left the course, and on returning next morning, I looked out for Mr. Wash; I discovered him drinking, and offering large bets; he saw me plainly, but affected a perfect forgetfulness, and did not recognise me. After waiting some time, and finding he would not address me, I approached him, and requested an opportunity of speaking to him apart. Mr. Wash instantly accompanied me, and began telling me he had got in a scrape, and had never in his life been in such a fix. Perceiving what he was at, I concluded to take the whip-hand of him, and observed—"Mr. Wash, if you design to intimate by your preliminary remarks that you cannot return to me my own money, staked in your hands, I must say I consider such conduct extremely ungentlemanly." Upon this he whipped out a spring-back dirk knife, nine inches in the blade, and whetted to cut a hair, stepped off, picked up a piece of cedar, and commenced whittling. "Now, stranger," says he, "I would not advise any man to try to run over me, for I ask no man any odds further than civility; I consider myself as honest a man as any in Harris county, Kentucky; but I'll tell you, stranger, exactly how it happened: you see when you offered to bet on the sorrel, I was out of soap, but it was too good a chance to let slip, as I

was dead sure Popcorn would win; and if he had won, you know, of course it made no difference to you whether I had a stake or not. Well, it was none of my business to hunt you up, so I went to town last night to the confectionary [a whiskey shop in a log pen fourteen feet square], and I thought I'd make a rise on chuck-a-luck; everywhere I touched was *pizen,* and I came out of the *leetle end* of the horn; but I'll tell you what, I'm a man that always stands up to my fodder, rack or no rack; so, as you don't want the money, I'll negotiate to suit you exactly; I'll give you my *dubisary:* I don't know that I can pay it this year, unless the *crap* of hemp turns out well; but if I can't this year, I will next year probably; and I'll tell you exactly my principle—if a man waits with me like a gentleman, I'm sure to pay him when I'm ready; but if a man tries to bear down on me and make me pay whether or no, you see it is his own look out, and he'll see sights before he gets his money." My respect for Mr. Wash's dirk-knife, together with my perceiving there was nothing else to be had, induced me to express my entire satisfaction with Mr. Wash's *dubisary,* hoping at the same time that at least *enough* of hemp would grow that year. He proposed that I should let him have five dollars more for a stake, but on my declining, he said, "Well, there is no harm in mentioning it." He went to the bar, borrowed pen and ink, and presently returned with a splendid specimen of caligraphy to the following effect:—

State of Kentucky, } Due Dempsey, the just and lawful sum of ten dol-
Jessamine county } lars, for value received, payable on the 26th day of December, 1836 or 1837, or any time after that I am able to discharge the same. As witness my hand and seal, this 30th day of May, 1836.

GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIGGS. {Seal}

I wish you would try Wall Street with this paper, as I wish to cash it; but I'll run a mile before I wait for a quarter race again.

SHIFTING the RESPONSIBILITY

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

From Polly Peablossom's Wedding, *1851, a collection of humorous tales edited by T. A. Burke, of Georgia.*

SHIFTING the RESPONSIBILITY

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

WHILE ATTENDING court, recently, in the adjoining county of Randolph, a friend who is fond of jokes of all sorts, and who relates them almost as humorously as "his Honour," gave us the following, vouching for the substantial, sub-lunar existence of the parties and their present residence "in the county aforesaid:"

Brethren Crump and Noel were both members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and both clever, honest men who paid their taxes and debts as the same annually accrued, with a regularity at once Christian and commendable. If, when settling day came round, Brother Noel was "short," Brother Crump was sure to be in funds; and on the other hand, it almost seemed providential how, if Brother Crump fell "behind," Brother Noel always had a surplus. Thus, borrowing from and lending to each other, worshipping at the same church, and living only a mile apart, an intimacy gradually ripened between them; so that at last they did not hesitate to speak in the freest and most familiar manner to each other, even in regard to their respective foibles.

Now, it came to pass that Brother Crump, during the liveliest period of the cotton season, drove into Wetumpka and disposed of his "crap" of ten bales, at the very fair price of 12½ cents per pound. It was more

than he expected, and as the world was easy with him, he determined to invest, and did actually invest, a portion of the proceeds of the sale of his cotton, in a barrel of Western whiskey; paying therefor at the rate of, precisely two pounds of middling cotton for one gallon of "ditto" whiskey.

Of course it was "norated in the settlement" that old man Crump had bought a whole barrel, and after a few weeks people began to observe that his nose grew redder and his eye more moist. The idea that Brother Crump was "drinking too much" diffused itself into the neighborhood, until, as one might say, it became epidemical. People talked and talked —more especially "what few" of other denominations of Christians dwell thereabouts.

Brother Noel was "sore troubled" at the scandal which circulated about his brother and friend, and especially regretted the injury it brought to the "'ciety" at Sharon. So one morning he stepped over to Brother Crump's and found the old man in a half doze in his little porch.

"Won't you take a dram?" asked Brother Crump, as soon as he was aware of the presence of his neighbour.

"Why, yes, I'm not agin a dram when a body wants it."

Brother Crump got his bottle, and the friends took a dram apiece.

"Don't you think, Brother Noel," said Crump, "that sperits is a blessin'?"

"Y-e-s!" responded Noel; "sperits is a blessin', but accordin' to my notion, its a blessin' that some of us abuses."

"Well, now, Brother Noel, *who* do you think abuses the blessin'?"

"Well, it's hard to say—but people talk—don't you think *you* drink too much, Brother Crump?"

"It's hard to say—it's hard to say," returned Crump. "Sometimes I've thought I *was* a drinkin' too much—then again, I'd think *may be not.* What is man? A weak *wurrum* of the dust! What the Lord saith, that shall be done! So I left it to the Lord to say whether I was goin' too fur in sperits. I put the whole *'sponsibility on him;* I prayed to him, if I was drinkin' too much, to *take away my appetite for sperits."*

Here Brother Noel groaned piously, and asked, "What then, Brother Crump?"

"And," replied Crump, "I've prayed that prayer three times, and HE HAIN'T DONE IT! So I'm clear of the 'sponsibility any way."

"The Lord's will be done!" ejaculated Noel, and after taking another dram he went home, thinking all the way, how cleverly Brother Crump had *shifted the responsibility!*

A Sage CONVERSATION

A. B. LONGSTREET

From Georgia Scenes *by A. B. Longstreet. See Introduction.*

A Sage CONVERSATION

A. B. LONGSTREET

I LOVE THE aged matrons of our land. As a class, they are the most pious, the most benevolent, the most useful, and the most harmless of the human family. Their life is a life of good offices. At home they are patterns of industry, care, economy, and hospitality; abroad, they are ministers of comfort, peace, and consolation. Where affliction is, there are they to assuage its pains. Nor night nor day, nor summer's heat nor winter's cold, nor angry elements, can deter them from scenes of suffering and distress. They are the first at the fevered couch, and the last to leave it. They hold the first and last cup to the parched lip. They bind the aching head, close the dying eye, and linger in the death-stricken habitation to pour the last drop of consolation into the afflicted bosoms of the bereaved. I cannot, therefore, ridicule them myself, nor bear to hear them ridiculed in my presence. And yet I am often amused at their conversations; and have amused *them* with a rehearsal of their own conversations, taken down by me when they little dreamed that I was listening to them. Perhaps my reverence for their character, conspiring with a native propensity to extract amusement from all that passes under my observation, has accustomed me to pay a uniformly strict attention to all they say in my presence.

This much in extraordinary courtesy to those who cannot distinguish between a simple narrative of an amusing interview and ridicule of the parties to it. Indeed, I do not know that the conversation which I am about to record will be considered amusing by any of my readers. Certainly the amusement of the readers of my own times is not the leading object of it, or of any of the *Georgia Scenes,* forlorn as may be the hope that their main object will ever be answered.

When I seated myself to the sheet now before me my attention was merely to detail a conversation between three ladies which I heard many years since, confining myself to only so much of it as sprang from the ladies' own thoughts, unawakened by the suggestions of others; but as the manner of its introduction will perhaps interest some of my readers, I will give it.

I was travelling with my old friend Ned Brace when we stopped, at the dusk of the evening, at a house on the roadside for the night. Here we found three nice, tidy, aged matrons, the youngest of whom could not have been under sixty; one of them, of course, was the lady of the house, whose husband, old as he was, had gone from home upon a land-exploration expedition. She received us hospitably, had our horses well attended to, and soon prepared for us a comfortable supper. While these things were doing, Ned and I engaged the other two in conversation, in the course of which Ned deported himself with becoming seriousness. The kind lady of the house occasionally joined us, and became permanently one of the party from the time the first dish was placed on the table. At the usual hour we were summoned to supper; and, as soon as we were seated, Ned unsolicited, and most unexpectedly to me, said grace. I knew full well that this was a prelude to some trick—I could not conjecture what. His explanation (except so much as I discovered myself) was, that he knew that one of us would be asked to say grace, and he thought he might as well save the good ladies the trouble of asking. The matter was, however, more fully explained just before the moment of our retiring to bed arrived. To this moment the conversation went round between the good ladies and ourselves with mutual interest to all. It was much enlivened by Ned, who was capable, as the reader has been heretofore informed, of making himself extremely agreeable in all company,

and who upon this occasion was upon his very best behavior. It was immediately after I had looked at my watch, in token of my disposition to retire for the night, that the conversation turned upon marriages, happy and unhappy, strange, unequal, runaways, etc. Ned rose in the midst of it, and asked the landlady where we should sleep. She pointed to an open shed-room adjoining the room in which we were sitting, and separated from it by a log partition, between the spaces of which might be seen all that passed in the dining-room, and so close to the fireplace of this apartment that a loud whisper might be easily heard from one to the other.

"The strangest match," said Ned, resuming the conversation with a parson's gravity, "that ever I heard of was that of George Scott and David Snow, two most excellent men, who became so much attached to each other that they actually got married—"

"The lackaday!" exclaimed one of the ladies.

"And was it really a fact?" inquired another.

"Oh yes, ma'am," continued Ned; "I knew them very well, and often went to their house; and no people could have lived happier or managed better than they did. And they raised a lovely parcel of children; as fine a set as I ever saw, except their youngest son, Billy; he was a little wild, but, upon the whole, a right clever boy himself. Come, friend Baldwin, we're sitting up too late for travellers." So saying, Ned moved to the shed-room, and I followed him.

The ladies were left in silent amazement; and Ned, suspecting, doubtless, that they were listening for a laugh from our chamber as we entered it, continued the subject with unabated gravity, thus: "You knew those two men, didn't you?"

"Where did they live?" inquired I, not a little disposed to humor him.

"Why, they lived down there on Cedar Creek, close by Jacob Denman's. Oh, I'll tell you who their daughter Nancy married; she married John Clarke. You knew him *very* well."

"Oh yes," said I, "I knew John Clarke very well. *His* wife *was* a most excellent woman."

"Well, the boys were just as clever, for boys, as she was for a girl, except Bill; and I never heard anything *very* bad of him, unless it was his

laughing in church; that put me more out of conceit of him than anything I ever knew of him. Now, Baldwin, when I go to bed, I go to bed to *sleep,* and not to talk; and, therefore, from the time my head touches the pillow, there must be no more talking. Besides, we must take an early start tomorrow, and I'm tired." So saying, he hopped into his bed, and I obeyed his injunctions.

Before I followed his example, I could not resist the temptation of casting an eye through the crack of the partition, to see the effect of Ned's wonderful story upon the kind ladies. Mrs. Barney (it is time to give their names) was sitting in a thoughtful posture, her left hand supporting her chin, and her knee supporting her left elbow. Her countenance was that of one who suffers from a slight toothache. Mrs. Shad leaned forward, resting her forearm on her knees, and looking into the fire as if she saw *groups of children* playing in it. Mrs. Reed, the landlady, who was the fattest of the three, was thinking and laughing alternately at short intervals. From my bed it required but a slight change of position to see any one of the group at pleasure.

I was no sooner composed on my pillow than the old ladies drew their chairs close together, and began the following colloquy in a low undertone which rose as it progressed:

Mrs. Barney. Didn't that man say them was two *men* that got married to one another?"

Mrs. Shad. It seemed to me so.

Mrs. Reed. Why, to be sure he did. I know he said so; for he said what their names was.

Mrs. B. Well, in the name o' sense, what did the man mean by saying they raised a fine pa'cel of children?

Mrs. R. Why, bless your heart and soul, honey! that's what I've been thinkin' about. It seems mighty curious to me, somehow or other. I can't study it out, nohow.

Mrs. S. The man must be jokin'; certainly.

Mrs. R. No, he wasn't jokin', for I looked at him, and he was just as much in yearnest as anybody I ever *seed;* and, besides, no *Christian* man would tell such a story in that solemn way. And didn't you hear that other man say he knew their da'ter Nancy?

Mrs. S. But, la messy! Mis' Reed, it can't be so. It doesn't stand to reason. Don't you know it don't?

Mrs. R. Well, I wouldn't think so; but it's hard for me somehow to dispute a *Christian* man's word.

Mrs. B. I've been thinking the thing all over in my mind, and I reckon now I don't say it is so, for I don't know nothing at all about it—but I reckon that one of them men was a woman dressed in men's clothes; for I've often hearn o' women doin' them things, and following their true-love to the wars, and bein' a waitin'-boy to 'em and all sich.

Mrs. S. Well, maybe it's somehow in that way; but, la me! 'twould 'a' been obliged to been found out. Don't you know it would? Only think how many children she had. Now it stands to reason that at some time or other it must have been found out.

Mrs. R. Well, I'm an old woman anyhow, and I reckon the good man won't mind what an old woman says to him; so, bless the Lord, if I live to see the morning, I'll ask him about it.

I knew that Ned was surpassed by no man living in extricating himself from difficulties; but how he was to escape from this, with even tolerable credit to himself, I could not devise.

The ladies here took leave of Ned's marvelous story, drew themselves closely round the fire, lighted their pipes, and proceeded as follows:

Mrs. B. Jist before me and my old man was married there was a gal named Nancy Mountcastle (puff, puff), and she was a mighty likely gal (puff); I know'd her mighty well; she dressed herself up in men's clothes (puff, puff), and followed Jemmy Darden from P'ankatank, in KING AND QUEEN (puff), clean up to LOUDON.

Mrs. S. (puff, puff, puff, puff, puff). And did he marry her?

Mrs. B. (sighing deeply). No; Jemmy didn't marry her; pity he hadn't, poor thing.

Mrs. R. Well, I know'd a gal on Tar River done the same thing (puff, puff, puff). She followed Moses Rusher 'way down somewhere in the South State (puff, puff).

Mrs. S. (puff, puff, puff, puff). And what did he do?

Mrs. R. Ah! (puff, puff). Lord bless your soul, honey, I can't tell you what he did. Bad enough.

Mrs. B. Well, now, it seems to me—I don't know much about it—but it seems to me, men don't like to marry gals that take on that way. It looks like it puts 'em out of concait of 'em.

Mrs. S. I know'd one man that married a woman that followed him from Car'lina to this State; but she didn't dress herself in men's clothes. You both know 'em. You know Simpson Trotty's sister and Rachael's son Reuben. 'Twas him and his wife.

Mrs. R. and Mrs. B. Oh yes, I know 'em mighty well.

Mrs. S. Well, it was his wife; she followed him out to this State.

Mrs. B. I know'd 'em all mighty well. Her da'ter Lucy was the littlest teeny bit of a thing when it was born I ever did see. But they tell me that when I was born—now I don't know anything about it myself, but the old folks used to tell me that when I was born they put me in a quart mug, and mought 'a' covered me up in it.

Mrs. S. The lackaday!

Mrs. R. What ailment did Lucy die of, Mis' Barney?

Mrs. B. Why, first she took the ager and fever, and took a 'bundance o' doctor's means for that. And then she got a powerful bad cough, and it kept gittin' worse and worse, till at last it turned into a comsumption, and she jist nat'ly wasted away, till she was nothing but skin and bone, and she died; but, poor creature, she died mighty happy; and I think in my heart she made the prettiest corpse, considerin', of anybody I 'most ever seed.

Mrs. R. and Mrs. S. Emph! (solemnly).

Mrs. R. What did the doctors give her for the fever and ager?

Mrs. B. Oh, they gin' her a 'bundance o' truck! I don't know what all; and none of 'em holp her at all. But at last she got over it, somehow or other. If they'd have just gi'n her a sweat o' bitter yerbs, jist as the spell was comin' on, it would have cured her right away.

Mrs. R. Well, I reckon sheep-saffron the onliest thing in nater for the ager.

Mrs. B. I've always hearn it was wonderful in hives and measly ailments.

Mrs. R. Well, it's just as good for an ager; it's a powerful sweat. Mrs.

Clarkson told me that her cousin Betsy's Aunt Sally's Nancy was cured sound and well by it of a hard shakin' ager.

Mrs. S. Why, you don't tell me so!

Mrs. R. Oh, bless your heart, honey, it's every word true; for she told me so with her own mouth.

Mrs. S. A hard, hard shakin' ager?

Mrs. R. Oh yes, honey, it's the truth.

Mrs. S. Well, I'm told that if you'll wrap the inside skin of an egg round your little finger, and go three days reg'lar to a young persimmon, and tie a string round it, and every day tie three knots in it, and then not go agin for three days, that the ager will leave you.

Mrs. B. I've often hearn o' that, but I don't know about it. Some people don't believe in it.

Mrs. S. Well, Davy Cooper's wife told me she didn't believe in it; but she tried it, and it cured her sound and well.

Mrs. R. I've hearn of many folks bein' cured in that way. And what did they do for Lucy's cough, Mis' Barney?

Mrs. B. Oh, dear me, they gin' her a powerful chance o' truck! I reckon, first and last, she took at least a pint o' lodimy.

Mrs. S. and Mrs. R. The law!

Mrs. S. Why, that ought to have killed her, if nothing else! If they'd jist gin' her a little cumfry and alecampane, stewed in honey, or sugar, or molasses, with a little lump o' mutton suet or butter in it, it would have cured her in two days, sound and well.

Mrs. B. I've always counted cumfry and alecampane the lead of all yerbs for colds.

Mrs. S. Horehound and sugar's 'mazin' good.

Mrs. R. Powerful good. I take mightily to a sweat of sage-tea in desperate bad colds.

Mrs. S. And so do I, Mis' Reed. Indeed, I have a great leanin' to sweats of yerbs, in all ailments sich as colds, and rheumaty pains, and pleurisies, and sich; they're wonderful good. Old Brother Smith came to my house from Bethany meeting in a mighty bad way with a cold and cough, and his throat and nose all stopped up; seemed like it would 'most

take his breath away; and it was dead o' winter, and I had nothin' but dried yerbs, sich as camomile, sage, pennyr'yal, catmint, horehound, and sich; so I put a hot rock to his feet, and made him a large bowl o' catmint tea, and I reckon he drank 'most two quarts of it through the night; and it put him in a mighty fine sweat, and loosened all the *phleem,* and opened all his head; and the next morning, says he to me, says he, Sister Shad—you know he's a mighty kind-spoken man, and always was so 'fore he joined the society; and the old man likes a joke yet right well, the old man does; but he's a mighty good man, and I think he prays with greater libity than 'most any one of his age I 'most ever seed; don't you think he does, Mis' Reed?

Mrs. R. Powerful.

Mrs. B. Who did he marry?

Mrs. S. Why, he married—stop, I'll tell you directly. Why, what does make my old head forget so?

Mrs. B. Well, it seems to me I don't remember like I used to. Didn't he marry a Ramsbottom?

Mrs. R. No. Stay, I'll tell you who he married presently. Oh, stay! why, I'll tell you who he married! He married old daddy Johnny Hooer's da'-ter Mournin'.

Mrs. S. Why, la! messy on me, so he did!

Mrs. B. Why, did he marry a Hooer?

Mrs. S. Why, to be sure he did. You knew Mournin'.

Mrs. B. Oh, mighty well; but I'd forgot that Brother Smith married her. I really thought he married a Ramsbottom.

Mrs. R. Oh no, bless your soul, honey, he married Mournin'!

Mrs. B. Well, the law me, I'm clear beat!

Mrs. S. Oh, it's so, you may be sure it is.

Mrs. B. Emph, emph, emph, emph! And Brother Smith married Mournin' Hooer! Well, I'm clear put out! Seems to me I'm gittin' mighty forgetful, somehow.

Mrs. S. Oh yes, he married Mournin', and I saw her when she joined society.

Mrs. B. Why, you don't tell me so!

Mrs. S. Oh, it's the truth. She didn't join till after she was married, and

the church took on mightily about his marrying one out of society. But after she joined they all got satisfied.

Mrs. R. Why, la me! the seven stars is 'way over here!

Mrs. B. Well, let's light our pipes and take a short smoke and go to bed. How did you come on raisin' chickens this year, Mis' Shad?

Mrs. S. La messy, honey! I have had mighty bad luck. I had the prettiest pa'cel you 'most ever seed till the varment took to killin' 'em.

Mrs. R. and Mrs. B. The varment! !

Mrs. S. Oh, dear, yes. The hawk catched a powerful sight of them; and then the varment took to 'em, and nat'ly took 'em fore and aft, bodily, till they left 'most none at all hardly. Sucky counted 'em up t'other day, and there warn't but thirty-nine, she said, countin' in the old speckle hen's chickens that jist come off of her nest.

Mrs. R. and Mrs. B. Humph-h-h-h!

Mrs. R. Well, I've had bad luck, too. Billy's hound-dogs broke up 'most all my nests.

Mrs. B. Well, so they did me, Mis' Reed. I always did despise a hound-dog upon the face of yea'th.

Mrs. R. Oh, they're the bawlinest, squallinest, thievishest things ever was about one; but Billy will have 'em, and I think in my soul his old Troup's the beat of all creaters I ever seed in all my born days a-suckin' o' hen's eggs. He's clean 'most broke me up entirely.

Mrs. S. The lackaday!

Mrs. R. And them that was hatched out, some took to takin' the gaps, and some the pip, and one ailment or other, till they 'most all died.

Mrs. S. Well, I reckon there must be somethin' in the season this year that ain't good for fowls; for Larkin Goodman's brother Jimme's wife's aunt Penny told me she lost 'most all her fowls with different sorts of ailments, the like of which she never seed before. They'd jist go 'long lookin' right well, and tilt right over backward (*Mrs. B.* The law!) and die right away (*Mrs. R.* Did you ever!), with a sort o' somethin' like the blind staggers.

Mrs. B. and Mrs. R. Messy on me!

Mrs. B. I reckon they must have eat somethin' didn't agree with them.

Mrs. S. No, they didn't, for she fed 'em every mornin' with her own hand.

Mrs. B. Well, it's mighty curious!

A short pause ensued, which was broken by Mrs. Barney with, "And Bother Smith married Mournin' Hooer!" It came like an opiate upon my senses, and I dropped asleep.

The next morning, when we rose from our beds, we found the good ladies sitting round the fire just as I left them, for they rose long before us.

Mrs. Barney was just in the act of ejaculating, "And Brother Smith married Mournin'—" when she was interrupted by our entry into the dining-room. We were hardly seated before Mrs. Reed began to verify her promise. "Mr.—," said she to Ned, "didn't you say last night that them was two *men* that got married to one another?"

"Yes, madam," said Ned.

"And didn't you say they raised a fine pa'cel of children?"

"Yes, madam, except Billy. I said, you know, that he was a little wild."

"Well, yes; I know you said Billy wasn't as clever as the rest of them. But we old women were talking about it last night after you went out, and none of us could make it out how they could have children; and I said, I reckoned you wouldn't mind an old woman's chat, and, therefore, that I would ask you how it could be. I suppose you won't mind telling an old woman how it was?"

"Certainly not, madam. They were both widowers before they fell in love with each other and got married."

"The lackaday! I wonder none of us thought o' that. And they had children before they got married?"

"Yes, madam; they had none afterwards that I heard of."

We were here informed that our horses were in waiting, and we bade the good ladies farewell.

HALL

A SNAKE-BIT IRISHMAN

GEORGE W. HARRIS

An Original Tennessee Hunting Incident

This Smoky Mountain tale appeared originally in the Spirit of the Times, *N. Y., 1846 January 17; Vol. XV, page 549. Having lost this version of the story, Harris rewrote it from memory, adapted it to the genius of "Sut," and included it in the* "Sut Lovingood Yarns" (*1867*). *The story was one of the most characteristic of the humorous hunting sketches that appeared in the* Spirit; *indeed, Harris was generally known as "The Author of the Snake-Bit Irishman." Wm. T. Porter, editor of the* Spirit, *was delighted with it, saying in his notes To Correspondents, "A gentleman who can write at heat such stories as the* Snake-Bit Irishman *is just as naturally 'bound to shine' as was 'Dandy Jim of Caroline.'"* (*S. '46 Sept. 19*).

A Snake-Bit IRISHMAN

GEORGE W. HARRIS

As a "Mounseer" would say, "one gran, magnifique, pretty good" Deer Hunt came off a few weeks since in the mountains of Morgan county, Tennessee. The party—made up of the best material—consisted of Judge A——, J. M. W——, J. A——, and some two or three veteran hunters, rife for sport and full of fun. As my object is not to give a detailed account of the hunt, but only one of its incidents, I shall content myself with merely saying, that after a four days' hunt the three gentlemen named returned with twenty pair of hams and divers specimens of smaller fry. J. A. killed a fine buck at 160 yards off hand, shooting at the head and hitting it. Judge A—— (an ardent sportsman and splendid rifle shot) also killed at "long taw." But a truce to this, and now for the incident.

As every day hath its night and every rose its thorn, so this mirthful party had its "pest," in the shape of a huge raw-boned loquacious Irishman, who, uninvited, had quartered himself in the camp, boarding and lodging at the expense of the crowd and contriving in countless ways to render himself a nuisance when awake, and when asleep accomplishing the same praise-worthy end without any contrivance at all—it being a

natural gift, and used by the possessor with most tormenting effect. *The man snored,* and *how* he snored, will presently appear; suffice to say, a more unmitigated nuisance was never abated in a more summary manner.

They soon learned by his conversation and behaviour that he was afraid of snakes generally, and "ould *snakes*" in particular; indeed, I think that the sequel warrants the bold assertion that he would have given long odds in favor of a Stock Creek gouging, rather than face an 18 inch moccasin with "bells on his tail," as he termed rattles. The man *had* heard some awful snake yarns or *tales* since his "laving the sod"; this was evident from the morbid dread, yes, horror, he felt of the crawling tribe. Well, with the Queen of Sheba he might truly say that "the half had not been told him," after a night's experience at a hunters' camp in Tennessee.

On the second night of his intrusion he made himself more than usually welcome, by "getting, sir, somewhat, sir, shot!" as Tom Murry said when an ounce of lead took up its lodgings in the "fork" of his breeches, thinking (if lead can) no doubt, that it had more *room* there than in the powder bed of an old brass boring iron. He told long dry yarns, all having a more or less remote bearing on his own prowess or skill, and more than once insinuated a desire to make a demonstration, by having the use of the skull of "ony jintlemin present, and a two fut thorn, fur jist a minit!" Well, all this was very pleasant, and I have no doubt perfectly satisfactory, so far as he individually was concerned, but with his hearers it was quite a different thing; yet still they endured it; but the cup of patience was nearly full, and that night it overflowed, bearing off on its boiling current, the "cause" of the "rise," to regions far away and unknown. After he had wearied him with his "blather," and showed symptoms of turning in, Jim A—— told *him* a *few* yarns bearing on the much dreaded snake subject, and particularly on their size, variety, and amiable temper in those parts, dwelling at length upon their *apparent* social disposition, assumed only with fell intent to those whose *nearer* acquaintance they sought. This evidently did not sit well on the excited stomach of this pugnacious sprig-of-shillalah, as was manifested by the furtive and uneasy glances he ever and anon cast at his blanket and "location." But bed time came, and after reconnoitering his sleeping ground he proceeded to

count his beads and the chances of "snake-bite" before day, then "tucking in" his blanket and wishing "the sowls ov all snakes in these parts in purthiculer," in a country where, to say the very least, they would have but a slim chance of indulging in their natural torpidity, he fell asleep.

And now the storm began. His snoring grew fast and furious, loud and long; occasionally a sort of half snort, half grunt, terminated with "snakes by jabers, blast their sowls!" "Ugh! ugh!" when there came the variation or chorus in the shape of a grind of his teeth that threatened to drive them through his jaw or crush them to powder; by way of variety he would hold his breath a few seconds and then snore again, and such snoring! my stars, that I could spell it! It was a sort of cross between the breathing of an asthmatic elephant and the braying of a superannuated donkey, whose will lasted longer than his wind. Well, it thus continued with the regularity of the whip-poor-will's cry until, say half an hour before daybreak, when J. M. W. (Jim W. we'll say), whose stock of patience had long ago evaporated, unrolled himself from his blanket, saying in his usual quiet way, "Humph! I'll *stop* that infernal concert or *start* the maker of it, see if I don't! Umph!" he then awoke Jim A. and the Judge, when a plot was laid and thus carried into execution.

W. got his hunting-knife and going to where the offal of a large deer had been thrown he cut off about seven feet of *gut,* and securing the ends with twine to retain the contents, he tied one end of it fast and tied to a corner of Paddy's shirt-tail that had wandered through a "rint" in the seat of his breeches, coiling it all up smooth by his side, snake-like and true. All things thus arranged, the conspirators laid down again, and at the conclusion of one of the stage-horn snores with the "snakes sowls" variation, Jim A. roared out at the top of his voice, "Hu wee! Huw wee! *A big copperheaded black rattle-snake, eleven feet long, has crawled up my breeches and is tying himself into a double-bow-knot round my body!"* giving the Irishman, with every word, a furious dig in the side with his elbow, with a running accompaniment on his shins with his heels! Of course, all this noise and hurting awoke him quick and wide; in his first movement he laid his hand on the nice cold coil of gut at his side. Hissing out a "Jayzus" from between his clenched teeth, he made a bound that carried him some ten feet clear of the camp, and with a force that straight-

ened out the coil and made the snake's tail crack like a cart whip! Casting one wild blazing look behind he tore off with the rapidity of lightning around the camp in a circle of some forty feet across, and at every bound shouting, or rather yelling, "Saze 'im! saze 'im by the tail! Oh, howly Vargin, stop 'im! Och, Saint Pathrick! tare 'im in till jabletts! A wha! A wha! Bate 'im to smittereens wid a gun, can't yees! He's got me fast howld by me—! och he has, by Jabers! *an he's a mendin his hoult,* a wha! Howly Father, he's got a shark hook on 'is tail! Och, murther, he's forty fut long!!" On making this last circuit he ran through a part of the smouldering campfire, and the twine at the aft end of the gut caught fire; this brought a new terror, and added a strong inducement for him to put on more steam and increase his rate; round and round he went! "He's a fiery sarpint. Och, murther! Howly Vargin, he carries a lite to see how to bite by! Och, help! I'm swallowed (jumping a log) intirely all but my hed! He's saxty fate long, if he's a fut! Thread on his bloody, fiery tail, will yees? Thry to save me!" then, as if inspired with new life and hope, he roared out, "Shoot 'im! shoot 'im! but don't aim at 'is hed! Shoot! shoot!"

Now here was a picture! There stood the Judge hugging a sapling with both arms and one leg, his head thrown back emitting scream after scream; here lay Jim W. on his back, with his feet against a tree, his arms elevated like a child's when he wants you to help him up, and it was scream for scream with the Judge. All sounds, at all like ordinary laughter, had ceased, and the present notes would have rendered immortal the vocal fame of a dozen panthers, accompanied in their concert by the fog whistle of a steam boat. Yonder stands Jim A.—"fat Jim"—with his legs about a yard apart, his hands on his hips, shouting at regular intervals of about five seconds, "Snake!—*Snake!!*—SNAKE!!!" at the same intonation, but so loud that the echoes mocked each other from fifty crags, and "Snake! Snake!" reverberated loud and long among mountain slopes, while his eyes carefully and closely followed the course of poor Paddy round the camp. After running round it about thirty times, the persecuted one flew off in a tangent into the dark woods, and the medley sounds of "snake! murdther! help! fire! saxty fut! Howly Vargin!" &c. gradually died away in the distance, and the hunters were alone.

"Umph," said Jim W. (after stopping his laughter hiccough), "umph, I thought *that gut* would stop snoring at *this* camp at least! Umph." The next evening the Patlander was seen traveling at a mighty rate through Knoxville, with a small bundle under one arm and a huge shillalah in the other hand, poked out ahead of him in a half defensive, half exploring attitude. When he was hailed by Archy Mc—— with, "Which way, Paddy?" Casting round at the speaker a sort of a hang-dog, sulky glance, he growled forth, a word at a step, "Strate to Ireland, by Jayzus, where there's no snakes!"

You cannot say "snake" to either member of the party yet, without its costing a set of vest buttons or producing a "stitch in the side."

SUGARTAIL.

Knoxville, Tenn., Dec. 25th, 1845.

CAPTAIN SUGGS AND LIEUT. SNIPES "Court-Martial" WIDOW HAYCOCK

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

From Simon Suggs, *1845, by J. J. Hooper, Ch. 8. A masterpiece in the ludicrous.*

CAPTAIN SUGGS AND LIEUT. SNIPES

"Court-Martial"

WIDOW HAYCOCK

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

GREAT WAS the commotion at Fort Suggs on the morning next after the occurrence of the events related in the last chapter. At Fort Suggs we say—for so had the Captain christened "Taylor's store" and the enclosure thereof. Nor let anyone reprehend him for so doing. It was but an exhibition of a vanity, which, if not laudable, at least finds its sufficient excuse in a custom that has prevailed, "time out of mind." Had not Romulus his Rome? Did not the pugnacious son of Philip call his Egyptian military settlement Alexandria? And—to descend to later times and to cases more directly in point—is there not a Fort Gaines in Georgia, and a Fort Jessup in Florida? Who then shall carp, when we say that Captain Simon Suggs bestowed *his* name upon the spot strengthened by his wisdom, and protected by his valor!

Great then, we repeat, was the commotion at Fort Suggs on the morning in question. The fact had become generally known—how could it be otherwise with thirty women in the immediate vicinity!—that Mrs. Haycock was to be "court-martialed" on that morning; and the commotion was the consequence. The widow herself was suffering great mental disquietude on this subject, in addition to considerable physical discomfort

occasioned by the fall and rough handling of the previous night. Under such circumstances, it could hardly be expected that her woes would fail to find utterance. And it would have been equally unreasonable to suppose that her fellow gossips would restrain the natural propensity of the sex. Let the reader, then, imagine—if he be not nervous—all the uproar and din which three dozen women can make under the most exciting circumstances, and he will have some faint conception of the commotion at Fort Suggs on the morning of the trial.

It was at an early hour; in fact—speaking according to the chronometrical standard in use at Fort Suggs—not more than "fust-drink time," when Captain Suggs took Lieutenant Snipes aside to consult with him in regard to some of the details of preparation for the court-martial.

"Snipes," said the Captain, as he seated himself a-straddle of the fence, and saw his lieutenant safely adjusted in a like position—"Snipes, as sure's you're born, thar's a diffikilty about this here court-martial. Now I want you to tell me *how* we're to hold a *drum-head* court-martial *when we aint got a drum!"*

Lieutenant Snipes looked very much puzzled, and in fact he *was* exceedingly puzzled, and he considered the matter for several moments, but could see no way by which the "diffikilty" might be surmounted. At length he remarked,

"It *does* look aukerd, Capting!"

"Yes. You see when these here court-martials is jumped up all of a sudden, like this, they're *ableeged* to be of the drum-head sort—that's what I've *allers* hearn. Well now, supposin' we was to hold one *without the drum,* and heng or shoot that everlastin' old she-devil; *would* the law jestify us in doin' so? Sometimes I sorter think it would, and then again it looks sorter jubous. What's *your* apinion, Lewtenant?"

"That's it—what you jist said," replies Lieutenant Snipes, deferentially.

"Good!" said the Captain—"lewtenants ought allers to think jist as ther captings do. It's a good sign."

"It's what *I've* allers done, and what I allers *expects* to do," replied Snipes.

"Well, well!" remarked Suggs, whose chief object was to impress Snipes with the idea that the widow's life was in actual danger—and through his

lieutenant, create that impression upon Mrs. Haycock herself, and all the rest—"well, well, *don't* you believe that ef I was to git a bar'l, or somethin' else pretty nigh *like* a drum, and hold the court-martial by that—don't you believe *that* would justify us ef any thing was brought up hereafter, supposin' we was to condemn the old woman to deth?"

"Belikes it would," said Snipes.

"I *know* it would!" said Suggs emphatically.

"*I* know so too!" remarked the lieutenant, with increased confidence.

"Well, now, all *that's* settled," said the Captain, with an air of satisfaction—"the next thing is, how are we agwine to put her to death?"

"Why, we ain't *tried* her yit!" said Snipes.

"To be sure! to be sure! I'd forgot that!—but you know thar's no way to git round condemnin' of her—is thar?"

"No way as *I* see!"

"It's a painful duty, Lewtenant! a very painful duty, Lewtenant Snipes; and very distressin'. But the rules of war is very strict, you know!"

"*Very* strict," said Snipes.

"And officers must do ther duty, come what may."

"They're *ableeged* to," said the lieutenant.

"Ah! well!" remarked Captain Suggs with considerable emotion, "it'll be time enough to fix how we shall execute the old critter at the trial. You think the bar'l will do?"

"Jist as good as any thing," replied Snipes—"a bar'l and a drum's sorter alike, any way."

"Well, you'd better go and fix up as well as you kin, and the natur' of the case will admit. Officers oughter dress as well as they kin at sich times, ef no other. I must go and bresh up, myself." And with that, the consultation between Captain Suggs and Lieutenant Snipes ended; the former going off to put himself a little more in military trim; while the later industriously employed himself in disseminating the result of the conference.

It was with extreme difficulty that the Captain arranged his costume to his own satisfaction, and made it befitting so solemn and impressive an occasion. After a great deal of trouble, however, he did contrive to cut a somewhat military figure. With a sword he was already "indifferently well" provided; having found one—rusty and without a scabbard—some

where about the premises. This he buckled, or rather tied, to his side with buckskin strings. He wore at the time, the identical blue jeanes frock-coat which has since become so familiar to the people of Tallapoosa—it was then new, but on this there were, of course, no epaulettes. Long time did Captain Suggs employ himself in devising expedients to supply the deficiency. At length he hit it. His wife had a large crimson pin-cushion, and this he fastened upon his left shoulder, having first caused some white cotton fringe to be attached to the outward edge. In lieu of crimson sash, he fastened around his waist a bright-red silk handkerchief, with only a few white spots on it. And this was an admirable substitute, except that it was almost too short to tie before, and exhibited no inconsiderable portion of itself in a depending triangle behind. The chapeau now alone remained to be managed. This was easily done. Two sides of the brim of his capacious beaver were stitched to the body of the hat, and at the fastening on the left side, Mrs. Suggs sewed a cockade of red ferreting, nearly as big as the bottom of a saucer. Thus imposingly habited—and having first stuffed the legs of his pantaloons into the tops of a very antique pair of boots—Captain Simon Suggs went forth.

At the upper end of the enclosure, and standing near an empty whiskey barrel, was Lieutenant Snipes. He had not been so successful as the Captain in the matter of his toilette. Around his black wool hat was pasted, or stitched, a piece of deep purple gilt paper, such as is often found upon bolts of linen. Upon this was represented a battle between a lion and a unicorn; and in a scroll above were certain letters, which as Lieutenant Snipes himself remarked, "didn't spell nothing"—at least, nothing that he could comprehend. In his hand was the handle of a hoe, armed at one extremity with a rusty bayonet—the only weapon of its kind, at that moment, to be found in the whole garrison at Fort Suggs. Equipped thus, and provided with a dirty sheet of paper, a portable inkstand (containing poke-berry juice), and the stump of a pen—all of which were upon the head of the barrel—the doughty Lieutenant awaited the moment when it should please Captain Suggs to arraign the prisoner and proceed with the trial.

"Tallapoosy Vollantares, parade here!" thundered Captain Suggs, as he walked up to the barrel.

Very soon the "component parts" of the "Vollantares" were grouped about their Captain.

"Form in a straight line!" squealed Lieutenant Snipes.

The company took the form of a half-moon!

Captain Suggs now ordered Mrs. Haycock to be brought out; whereupon Snipes went into the back-room of the store, and directly appeared again, leading the widow—who limped considerably, and howled like a full pack of wolves—by the hand. The Captain, however, by a judicious threat of instant decapitation, reduced the noise to a series of mere sobbings.

"Hadn't we better fix some way to have some music," said Suggs, "and march round the house once, before we perceed with the trial?"

Lieutenant Snipes suggested that there was no drum or fife, as the Captain knew, on the premises, but that "uncle Billy Allen" was an excellent drummer, and Joe Nalls a first-rate performer on the fife, and that perhaps those individuals might, for the nonce, be induced to make vocal imitations of their respective instruments, and with their hands "go through the motions" indispensable to their proper effect. Captain Suggs immediately spoke to those gentlemen, and they "kindly consented" to serve, on the very equitable condition of receiving a "drink" each, as soon as the affair was over.

The "vollantares" were now formed in double files, and between the two columns Mrs. Haycock, supported by a female friend on each side, was placed.

"Music to the front!" shouted Suggs; and the order was promptly obeyed.

"Company! March!"

"Dub—dub—dub-a-dub-a-dub," went "uncle Billy Allen," inclining dangerously from the perpendicular, in order to support properly, a non-existent drum!

"Phee-ee-phee-fee," whistled Mr. Nalls, as his fingers played rapidly upon the holes of his imaginary fife!

And the company marched, as it was ordered. Suggs, of course, headed the array, walking backwards in order to inspect its movements; while Snipes, with his bayonet, walked alongside and kept a sharp eye on the

prisoner. Thus they marched slowly around the enclosure, and returned to the spot whence they started.

"Halt! Form a round ring all round the drum!" ordered the Captain, pointing to the barrel.

The "vollantares" arranged themselves so as to describe, not exactly a mathematical circle, but a figure slightly approximating thereto, with the Captain, Lieutenant Snipes, and the widow, in the centre.

"Betsy Haycock," said Captain Suggs, "you're fotch up here accordin' to the rigelations of drum-head court-martial, for infringin' on the rules of war, by crossin' of the lines agin orders; and that too, when the fort was under martial law. Ef you've got any thing to say agin havin' your life tuk, less hear it."

Poor Mrs. Haycock became livid; her eyes dilated, and all her features assumed that sudden sharpness which mortal terror often produces. Trembling in all her joints, and with pallid lips, she gasped,

"Mercy! mercy! Captain Suggs! For God's sake don't kill me—oh don't ef you please! I only went for my tobakker—for the love of the Lord *don't* murder me! Have mercy—I'll never—no never—as long—"

"It aint *me,*" said the Captain interrupting her; "it aint *me* that's a-gwine to kill you; it's the *Rules of War.* The rules of war is mighty strict—aint they, Lewtenant Snipes?"

"*Powerful* strict!" said Snipes.

"You've 'fessed the crime," continued Suggs, "and ef me and the Lewtenant wanted to let you off ever so bad, the rules of war would lay us liable ef we was to. But come, Lewtenant Snipes," he added, addressing that person; "the prisoner has made her acknowledgements; take your pen and ink, and let's go and see what's to be done about it."

The Lieutenant took up his writing materials, and the couple retired to a corner of the fence, where they seated themselves upon the ground. Directly Snipes was seen to write; and then he picked up his pen and ink again, and they returned.

"What—what—what's it?" chokingly inquired the widow, as they reassumed their positions at the barrel.

"Read out the judg*ment,*" said Suggs with immense solemnity.

Snipes read what he had written in the fence-corner, as follows:

"Whares, Betsy Haycock were brought up afore us, bein' charged with infringin' the rules of war by crossin' of the lines agin orders, and Fort Suggs bein' under martial law at the time, and likewise ecknowlidged she was gilty, Tharfore we have tried her eccordin to said rules of war, and condemns her to be baggonetted to deth in one hour from this time, witness our hands and seals."

A paleness more ghastly than that of death, came over the widow's face as she heard the sentence. Falling to the earth, she grovelled at the feet of Captain Suggs.

"Save me—pity—help! for God's sake! Oh don't kill me Captain Suggs! —beg for me, Mr. Snipes. Oh, you won't—I know you won't murder me! You're jest in fun!—aint you? You couldn't have the *heart* to kill a poor woman creetur like me!"—and then she added in a hoarse whisper—"I'll humble myself to you, Captain Suggs! I'll git down on my very knees, and kiss your shoe! Don't take my life away with that—" she didn't finish the sentence, but shuddered all over, as she thought of Snipes' rusty bayonet.

"Oh! Jimminny Crimminny! what a cussed old fool!" exclaimed a voice from the fence-corner, outside, which was instantly recognized as belonging to Yellow-legs—"he darsent no more kill you, 'an he dare to fight an Injun!"

The widow looked up, but took no comfort from the words. Captain Suggs, highly indignant, seized a large stone and projected it with Titan-like force, at the dirt-eater; but it struck the fence. Yellow-legs, not at all alarmed, turned his back to Suggs, and made a gesture expressive of the highest degree of contempt, and then bounded off.

"Lewtenant, prepar' for execution!" said the Captain, as he returned to the barrel.

Mrs. Haycock renewed her lamentations and entreaties.

"I wish," said Suggs, in a fit of mental abstraction, but soliloquizing *aloud;* "thar *was* some way to save her. But ef I was to let her off with a *fine,* I might be layin' myself liable to be tried for my own life."

"Oh yes! Captain Suggs, I'll pay any fine you'll put on me—I'll give up

all the money I've got, ef you'll jest let me off—do now, dear Captain—"

"Hey? What? Have *I* been talkin' out loud?" inquired Suggs, starting with a disconcerted look from his reverie.

"Yes, yes!" answered the widow with great earnestness; "you said ef I'd pay a fine, you'd spar my life—didn't you now, *dear, good* Captain Suggs?"

"Ef I did, I oughtent to 'a done it. I don't think I'd be jestified ef I was to let you off. The rules of war would hold *me* 'countable ef I did—don't you think they would, Lewtenant?"

"*Mighty* apt!" said Snipes, as he sharpened the end of his rusty bayonet on a fragment of rock, by way of preparing for the execution of the widow.

Mrs. Haycock adjured Captain Suggs by his affection for his own offspring, to impose a fine, instead of "makin' her poor fatherless children, orfins!" Tears came into Suggs' eyes at this appeal, and the sternness of the officer was lost in the sensibility of the man.

"Don't you think, Lewtenant," he asked, "bein' as it's a *woman*—a *widder* woman too—the rules of war wouldn't be as severe on us for lettin' of her off, *purvidin'* she paid a reasonable fine?"

"They wouldn't be severe at all!" replied Snipes.

"Well, well, widder! Bein' as it's you—a perticlar friend and close neighbor—and bein' *as* you're a widder, and on the 'count of my feelins for Billy Haycock, which was your husband afore he died, I s'pose I'll have to run the resk. But it's a orful 'sponsibility I'm a takin, jist for friend*ship,* widder—"

Mrs. Haycock interrupted him with a torrent of thanks and benedictions.

"Thar aint *many,"* continued Suggs, "I'd take sich a 'sponsibility for: I may be a-runnin of *my own neck* into a halter!"

"The Lord in Heaven purvent your ever sufferin' bekase yu've tuk pity on a poor widder like me!" was the grateful woman's ejaculation.

"Hows'ever," added Suggs, "to shorten the matter, jist pay down twenty-five dollars, and I'll pardon you ef I *do* git into a scrape about it —I never *could* bar to see a woman suffer! it strikes me right *here!"* and the Captain placed his hand upon his breast in a most impressive manner.

The joyful Mrs. Haycock immediately untied a key from her girdle, and handing it to one of her friends, sent her into the store, with directions to "sarch low down, in the left hand corner before of her chist," and bring a certain stocking she would find there filled with coin. This was speedily done, and the amount of the fine handed to Captain Suggs.

"This here money," he remarked as he received it, "I want you all to onderstand, ain't *my* money. No! no! I have to keep it here"—sliding it into his pockets—"ontwell I git *my* orders about it. It's the *government's* money, and *I* darsent spend a cent of it—do I, Lewtenant?"

"No more'n you dar to put your head in a blazin' log-pile!" answered the Lieutenant.

A whistling—just such as always implies that somebody, in the immediate neighbourhood of the whistler, *lies tremendously*—was heard at this moment, and Suggs looking round, saw Yellow-legs in his old corner, dealing a supposititious hand of cards to an imaginary antagonist—as if he would thereby intimate that Captain Simon Suggs would embezzle the public money, or at any rate, hazard its loss at cards.

"Charge baggonets on that cussed, pumpkin-faced whelp of the devil!" roared the Captain in the frenzy of the moment; and Lieutenant Snipes dashed at Yellow-legs with his rusty weapon, which he plunged through a crack of the fence. Before the gallant Snipes, however, could recover from the impetus of his attack and withdraw the bayonet, the dirt-eater had pulled it off the hoe-handle, and fixing it on a dry corn-stalk, bore it aloft upon his shoulder most contumaciously, under the very nose of Captain Suggs!

* * * * * * * * * *

The reader will please suppose fifteen minutes to have elapsed, and Captain Suggs and his Lieutenant to be behind the store chimney, in private conversation.

"Lewtenant Snipes!" said Suggs, "I look upon you as a high-minded, honubble officer, and a honor to the Tallapoosy Vollantares. I like to see a man do his duty like you done *yourn!* Here, take *that!"*—handing him one of Mrs. Haycock's dollars—"Simon Suggs never forgits his friends—

NEVER! His motter is allers, *Fust* his *country,* and *then* his friends!"

"Captain Suggs"—was the Lieutenant's reply, as he made a minute examination of the Mexican coin in his hand—"I've said it *behind your back,* and I'll say it *to your face;* you're a *gentleman* from the top of your head to the end of your big-toe nail! Less go in and liquor; damn expenses!"

GEORGIA THEATRICS

A. B. LONGSTREET

From Georgia Scenes, *1835, by A. B. Longstreet. Poe remarked that the "whole anecdote is told with a raciness and vigor which would do favor to the pages of Blackwood."* Poe, Southern Literary Messenger, *March 1836.*

GEORGIA THEATRICS

A. B. LONGSTREET

If my memory fail me not, the 10th of June, 1809, found me, at about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, ascending a long and gentle slope in what was called "The Dark Corner" of Lincoln. I believe it took its name from the moral darkness which reigned over that portion of the county at the time of which I am speaking. If in this point of view it was but a shade darker than the rest of the county, it was inconceivably dark. If any man can name a trick or sin which had not been committed at the time of which I am speaking, in the very focus of all the county's illumination (Lincolnton), he must himself be the most inventive of the tricky and the very Judas of sinners. Since that time, however (all humor aside), Lincoln has become a living proof "that light shineth in darkness." Could I venture to mingle the solemn with the ludicrous, even for the purposes of honorable contrast, I could adduce from this county instances of the most numerous and wonderful transitions from vice and folly to virtue and holiness which have ever, perhaps, been witnessed since the days of the apostolic ministry. So much, lest it should be thought by some that what I am about to relate is characteristic of the county in which it occurred.

Whatever may be said of the moral condition of the Dark Corner at the time just mentioned, its natural condition was anything but dark. It smiled in all the charms of spring; and spring borrowed a new charm

from its undulating grounds, its luxuriant woodlands, its sportive streams, its vocal birds, and its blushing flowers.

Rapt with the enchantment of the season and the scenery around me, I was slowly rising the slope, when I was startled by loud, profane, and boisterous voices, which seemed to proceed from a thick covert of undergrowth about two hundred yards in the advance of me and about one hundred to the right of my road.

"You kin, kin you?"

"Yes, I kin, and am able to do it! Boo-oo-oo! Oh, wake snakes, and walk your chalks! Brimstone and—fire! Don't hold me, Nick Stoval! The fight's made up, and let's go at it —My soul if I don't jump down his throat, and gallop every chitterling out of him before you can say 'quit'!"

"Now, Nick, don't hold him! Jist let the wild-cat come, and I'll tame him. Ned'll see me a fair fight! Won't you, Ned?"

"Oh yes; I'll see you a fair fight, blast my old shoes if I don't!"

"That's sufficient, as Tom Haynes said when he saw the elephant. Now let him come!"

Thus they went on, with countless oaths interspersed, which I dare not even hint at, and with much that I could not distinctly hear.

In mercy's name! thought I, what band of ruffians has selected this holy season and this heavenly retreat for such pandemoniac riots! I quickened my gait, and had come nearly opposite to the thick grove whence the noise proceeded, when my eye caught, indistinctly and at intervals, through the foliage of the dwarf-oaks and hickories which intervened, glimpses of a man, or men, who seemed to be in a violent struggle; and I could occasionally catch those deep-drawn, emphatic oaths which men in conflict utter when they deal blows. I dismounted, and hurried to the spot with all speed. I had overcome about half the space which separated it from me, when I saw the combatants come to the ground, and, after a short struggle, I saw the uppermost one (for I could not see the other) make a heavy plunge with both his thumbs, and at the same instant I heard a cry in the accent of keenest torture, "Enough! My eye's out!"

I was so completely horror-struck that I stood transfixed for a moment to the spot where the cry met me. The accomplices in the hellish deed

which had been perpetrated had all fled at my approach—at least, I supposed so, for they were not to be seen.

"Now, blast your corn-shucking soul!" said the victor (a youth about eighteen years old) as he rose from the ground—"come cutt'n' your shines 'bout me agin, next time I come to the court-house, will you? Get your owl eye in agin if you can!"

At this moment he saw me for the first time. He looked excessively embarrassed, and was moving off, when I called to him, in a tone emboldened by the sacredness of my office and the iniquity of his crime, "Come back, you brute, and assist me in relieving your fellow-mortal, whom you have ruined forever!"

My rudeness subdued his embarrassment in an instant; and, with a taunting curl of the nose, he replied, "You needn't kick before you're spurr'd. There a'n't nobody there, nor ha'n't been nother. I was jist seein' how I could 'a' fout." So saying, he bounded to his plough, which stood in the corner of the fence about fifty yeards beyond the battle-ground.

And, would you believe it, gentle reader? his report was true. All that I had heard and seen was nothing more nor less than a Lincoln rehearsal, in which the youth who had just left me had played all the parts of all the characters in a court-house fight.

I went to the ground from which he had risen, and there were the prints of his two thumbs, plunged up to the balls in the mellow earth, about the distance of a man's eyes apart; and the ground around was broken up as if two stags had been engaged upon it.

SICILY BURNS'S WEDDING

GEORGE W. HARRIS

From Sut Lovingood's Yarns, *(1867), by G. W. Harris. See Introduction.*

SICILY BURNS'S WEDDING

GEORGE W. HARRIS

"Hey Ge-orge!" rang among the mountain slopes; and looking up to my left, I saw "Sut" tearing along down a steep point, heading me off, in a long kangaroo lope, holding his flask high above his head, and hat in hand. He brought up near me, banteringly shaking the half-full "tickler," within an inch of my face.

"Whar am yu gwine? Take a suck, hoss? This yere truck's *ole*. I kotch hit myse'f, hot this mornin frum the still wum. Nara durn'd bit ove strike-nine in hit—I put that ar piece ove burnt dried peach in myse'f tu gin hit color—better nur old Bullen's plan: he puts in tan ooze, in what he sells, an' when that hain't handy, he uses the red warter outen a pon' jis' below his barn;—makes a pow'ful natral color, but don't help the taste much. Then he correcks that wif red pepper; hits an orful mixtry, that whisky ole Bullen makes; no wonder he seed 'Hell-sarpints.' He's pisent ni ontu three quarters ove the b'levin parts ove his congregashun wif hit, an' tuther quarter he's sot intu ruff stealin an' cussin. Ef his still-'ous don't burn down, ur he peg out hisse'f, the neighborhood am ruinated a-pas salvashun. Haint he the durndes sampil ove a passun yu ever seed eny-how?

"Say George, du yu see these yere well-poles what I uses fur laigs? Yu sez yu sees em, dus yu?"

"Yes."

"Very well; I passed 'em a-pas' each uther tuther day, right peart. I put one out a-head jis' so, an' then tuther 'bout nine feet a-head ove hit agin jis' so, an' then kep on a-duin hit. I'll jis' gin yu leav tu go tu the devil ha'f hamon, ef I didn't make fewer tracks tu the mile, an' more tu the minit, than wer ever made by eny human man body, since Bark Wilson beat the sawlog frum the top ove the Frog Mountin intu the Oconee River, an' dove, an' dodged hit at las'. I hes allers look'd ontu that performince ove Bark's as onekel'd in histery, allers givin way tu dad's ho'net race, however.

"George, every livin thing hes hits pint, a pint ove sum sort. Ole Bullen's pint is a durn'ed fust rate, three bladed, dubbil barril'd, warter-proof, hypockracy, an' a never-tirein appertite fur bal'-face. Sicily Burns's pint am tu drive men folks plum crazy, an' then bring em too agin. Gin em a rale Orleans fever in five minits, an' then in five minits more, gin them a Floridy ager. Durn her, she's down on her heels flat-footed now. Dad's pint is tu be king ove all durn'd fools, ever since the day ove that feller what cribb'd up so much co'n down in Yegipt, long time ago (he run outen his coat yu minds). The Bibil tell us hu wer the stronges' man—hu wer the bes' man—hu wer the meekis' man, an' hu the wises' man, but leaves yu tu guess hu wer the bigges' fool.

"Well, any man what cudent guess arter readin that ar scrimmage wif an 'oman 'bout the coat, haint sense enuf tu run intu the hous', ef hit wer rainin ded cats, that's all. Mam's pint am in kitchen insex, bakin hoecake, bilin greens, an' runnin bar laiged. My pint am in taking aboard big skeers, an' then beatin enybody's hoss, ur skared dorg, a-running frum onder em agin. I used tu think my pint an' dad's wer jis' the same, sulky, unmix'd king durn'd fool; but when he acted hoss, an' mistook hossflies fur ho'nets, I los' heart. Never mine, when I gits his 'sperence, I may be king fool, but yet great golly, he gets frum bad tu wus, monstrus fas'.

"Now ef a feller happens tu know what his pint am, he kin allers git along, sumhow, purvided he don't swar away his liberty tu a temprins s'ciety, live tu fur frum a still-'ous, an' too ni a chu'ch ur a jail. Them's

my sentimints on 'pints,'—an' yere's my sentimints ontu folks: Men wer made a-purpus jis' tu eat, drink, an' fur stayin awake in the yearly part ove the nites: an' wimen wer made tu cook the vittils, mix the sperits, an' help the men du the stayin awake. That's all, an' nuthin more, onless hits fur the wimen tu raise the devil atwix meals, an' knit socks atwix drams, an' the men to play short kerds, swap hosses wif fools, an' fite fur exercise, at odd spells.

"George, yu don't onderstan life yet scarcely at all, got a heap tu larn, a heap. But 'bout my swappin my laigs so fas'—these yere very par ove laigs. I hed got about a fox squirril skin full ove biled co'n juice packed onder my shut, an' onder my hide too, I mout es well add, an' wer aimin fur Bill Carr's on foot. When I got in sight ove ole man Burns's, I seed ni ontu fifty hosses an' muels hitch'd tu the fence. Durnashun! I jis' then tho't ove hit, 'twer Sicily's wedding day. She married old Clapshaw, the suckit rider. The very feller hu's faith gin out when he met me sendin sody all over creashun. Suckit-riders am surjestif things tu me. They preaches agin me, an' I hes no chance tu preach back at them. Ef I cud I'd make the institushun behave hitsef better nur hit dus. They hes sum wunderful pints, George. Thar am two things nobody never seed; wun am a dead muel, an' tuther is a suckit-rider's grave. Kaze why, the he muels all turn intu old field school-masters, an' the she ones intu strong minded wimen, an' then when thar time cums, they dies sorter like uther folks. An' the suckit-riders ride ontil they marry; ef they marrys money, they turns intu store-keepers, swaps hosses, an' stays away ove colleckshun Sundays. Them what marrys, an' by sum orful mistake *misses the money,* jis' turns intu polertishuns, sells 'ile well stock,' an' dies sorter in the human way too.

"But 'bout the wedding. Ole Burns hed a big black an' white bull, wif a ring in his snout, an' the rope tied up roun his ho'ns. They rid 'im tu mill, an' sich like wif a saddil made outen two dorgwood forks, an' two clapboards, kivered wif a ole piece ove carpet, rope girth, an' rope stirrups wif a loop in hit fur the foot. Ole 'Sock,' es they call'd the bull, hed jis' got back frum mill, an' wer turn'd intu the yard, saddil an' all, tu solace hissef a-pickin grass. I wer slungin roun the outside ove the hous', fur they hedn't hed the manners tu ax me in, when they sot down tu

dinner. I wer pow'fully hurt 'bout hit, an' happen'd tu think—SODY. So I sot in a-watchin fur a chance tu du sumthin. I fus' tho't I'd shave ole Clapshaw's hoss's tail, go tu the stabil an' shave Sicily's mare's tail, an' ketch ole Burns out, an' shave his tail too. While I wer a-studyin 'bout this, ole Sock wer a-nosin 'roun, an' cum up ontu a big baskit what hilt a littil shattered co'n; he dipp'd in his head tu git hit, an' I slipp'd up an' jerked the handil over his ho'ns.

"Now, George, ef yu knows the nater ove a cow brute, they is the durndes fools amung all the beastes ('scept the Lovingoods); when they gits intu tribulashun, they knows nuffin but tu shot thar eyes, beller, an' back, an' keep a-backin. Well, when ole Sock raised his head an' foun hissef in darkness, he jis' twisted up his tail, snorted the shatter'd co'n outen the baskit, an' made a tremenjus lunge agin the hous'. I hearn the picters a-hangin agin the wall on the inside a-fallin. He fotch a deep loud rusty beller, mout been hearn a mile, an' then sot intu a onendin sistem ove backin. A big craw-fish wif a hungry coon a-reachin fur him, wer jis' nowhar. Fust agin one thing, then over anuther, an' at las' agin the bee-bainch, knockin hit an' a dozen stan ove bees heads over heels, an' then stompin back'ards thru the mess. Hit haint much wuf while tu tell what the bees did, ur how soon they sot intu duin hit. They am pow'ful quick-tempered littil critters, enyhow. The air wer dark wif 'em, an' Sock wer kivered all over, frum snout tu tail, so clost yu cudent a-sot down a grain ove wheat fur bees, an' they wer a-fitin one anuther in the air, fur a place on the bull. The hous' stood on sidelin groun, an' the back door wer even wif hit. So Sock happen tu hit hit plum, jis' backed intu the hous' onder 'bout two hundred an' fifty pouns ove steam, bawlin orful, an' every snort he fotch he snorted away a quart ove bees ofen his sweaty snout. He wer the leader ove the bigges' an' the madest army ove bees in the worild. Thar wer at leas' five solid bushels ove 'em. They hed filled the baskit, an' hed lodged ontu his tail, ten deep, ontil hit wer es thick es a waggin tung. He hed hit stuck strait up in the air, an' hit looked adzackly like a dead pine kivered wif evey. I think he wer the hottes' and wus hurtin bull then livin; his temper, too, seemed tu be pow'fully flustrated. Ove *all* the durn'd times an' kerryins on yu *ever* hearn tell on wer thar an' thar abouts.

He cum tail fust agin the ole two story Dutch clock, an' fotch hit,

bustin hits runnin geer outen hit, the littil wheels a-trundlin over the floor, an' the bees even chasin them. Nex pass, he fotch up agin the foot ove a big dubbil injine bedstead, rarin hit on aind, an' punchin one ove the posts thru a glass winder. The next tail fus' experdishun wer made aginst the caticorner'd cupboard, outen which he made a perfeck momox. Fus' he upsot hit, smashin in the glass doors, an' then jis' sot in an' stomp'd everything on the shelves intu giblits, a-tryin tu back furder in that direckshun, an' tu git the bees ofen his laigs.

"Pickil crocks, preserves jars, vinegar jugs, seed bags, yarb bunches, paragorick bottils, aig baskits, an' del war—all mix'd dam permiskusly, an' not worth the sortin, by a duller an' a 'alf. Nex he got a far back acrost the room agin the board pertishun; he went thru hit like hit hed been paper, takin wif him 'bout six foot squar ove hit in splinters, an' broken boards, intu the nex room, whar they wer eatin dinner, an' rite yere the fitin becum gineral, an' the dancin, squawkin, cussin, an' dodgin begun.

"Clapshaw's ole mam wer es deaf es a dogiron, an sot at the aind ove the tabil, nex tu whar old Sock busted thru the wall; tail fus' he cum agin her cheer, a-histin her an' hit ontu the tabil. Now, the smashin ove delf, an' the mixin ove vittils begun. They hed sot severil tabils tugether tu make hit long enuf. So he jis' rolled 'em up a-top ove one anuther, an' thar sot ole Missis Clapshaw, a-straddil ove the top ove the pile, a-fitin bees like a mad wind-mill, wif her caliker cap in one han, fur a wepun, an' a cract frame in tuther, an' a-kickin, an' a-spurrin like she wer ridin a lazy hoss arter the doctor, an' a-screamin rape, fire, an' murder, es fas' es she cud name 'em over.

"Taters, cabbige, meat, soup, beans, sop, dumplins, an' the truck what yu wallers 'em in; milk, plates, pies, puddins, an' every durn fixin yu cud think ove in a week, wer thar, mix'd an' mashed, like hit had been thru a thrashin-meesheen. Ole Sock still kep a-backin, an' backed the hole pile, ole 'oman an' all, also sum cheers, outen the frunt door, an' down seven steps intu the lane, an' then by golly, turn'd a fifteen hundred poun summerset hissef arter em, lit a-top ove the mix'd up mess, flat ove his back, an' then kicked hissef ontu his feet agin. About the time he ris, ole man Burns—yu know how fat, an' stumpy, an' cross-grained he is, eny-how—made a vigrus mad snatch at the baskit, an' got a savin holt ontu

hit, but cudent *let go quick enuf;* fur ole Sock jis' snorted, bawled, an' histed the ole cuss heels fust up intu the air, an' he lit on the bull's back, an' hed the baskit in his han.

"Jis' es soon es ole Blackey got the use ove his eyes, he tore off down the lane tu out-run the bees, so durn'd fas' that ole Burns wer feard tu try tu git off. So he jis' socked his feet intu the rope loops, an' then cummenc'd the durndes' bull-ride ever mortal man ondertuck. Sock run atwix the hitched critters an' the rail-fence, ole Burns fust fitin him over the head wif the baskit tu stop him, an' then fitin the bees wif hit. I'll jis' be durn'd ef I didn't think he hed four ur five baskits, hit wer in so meny places at onst. Well, Burns, baskit, an' bull, an' bees, skared every durn'd hoss an' muel loos frum that fence—bees ontu all ove 'em, bees, by golly, everywhar. Mos' on 'em, too, tuck a fence-rail along, fas' tu the bridil reins. Now I'll jis gin yu leave tu kiss my sister Sall till she squalls, ef ever sich a sight wer seed ur sich nises hearn, es filled up that long lane. A heavy cloud ove dus', like a harycane hed been blowin, hid all the hosses, an' away abuv hit yu cud see tails, an' ainds ove fence-rails a-flyin about; now an' then a par ove bright hine shoes wud flash in the sun like two sparks, an' away ahead wer the baskit a-sirklin round an' about at randum. Brayin, nickerin, the bellerin ove the bull, clatterin ove runnin hoofs, an' a mons'ous rushin soun, made up the noise. Livly times in that lane jis' then, warn't thar?

"I swar ole Burns kin beat eny man on top ove the yeath a-fitin bees wif a baskit. Jis' set 'im a-straddil ove a mud bull, an' let thar be bees enuf tu exhite the ole man, an' the man what beats him kin break me. Hosses an' muels wer tuck up all over the county, an' sum wer forever los'. Yu cudent go eny course, in a cirkil ove a mile, an' not find buckils, stirrups, straps, saddil blankits, ur sumthin belongin tu a saddil hoss. Now don't forgit that about that hous' thar wer a good time bein had ginerally. Fellers an' gals loped outen windows, they rolled outen the doors in bunches, they clomb the chimleys, they darted onder the house jis' tu dart out agin, they tuck tu the thicket, they rolled in the wheat field, lay down in the krick, did everything but stan still. Sum made a straight run *fur* home, an' sum es strait a run *from* home; livelyest folks I ever did see. Clapshaw crawled onder a straw pile in the barn, an' sot intu prayin—yu cud

a-hearn him a mile—sumthin 'bout the plagues ove Yegipt, an' the pains ove the secon death. I tell yu now he lumbered.

"Sicily, she squatted in the cold spring, up tu her years, an' turn'd a milk crock over her head, while she wer a drownin a mess ove bees onder her coats. I went to her, an' sez I, 'Yu hes got anuther new sensashun, haint yu?' Sez she—

" 'Shet yer mouth, yu cussed fool!'

"Sez I, 'Power'ful sarchin feelin bees gins a body, don't they?'

" 'Oh, lordy, lordy, Sut, these yere 'bominabil insex is jis' burnin me up!'

" 'Gin 'em a mess ove SODY,' sez I, 'that'll cool 'em off, an' skeer the las' durn'd one ofen the place.'

"She lifted the crock, so she cud flash her eyes at me, an' sed, 'Yu go tu hell!' *jis es plain.* I thought, takin all things tugether, that p'raps I mout es well put the mountin atwix me an' that plantashun; an' I did hit.

"Thar warnt an' 'oman, ur a gal at that weddin, but what thar frocks an' stockins wer too tite fur a week. Bees am wus on wimen than men, enyhow. They hev a farer chance at 'em. Nex day I passed ole Hawley's, an' his gal Betts wer sittin in the porch, wif a white hankerchef tied roun her jaws; her face wer es red es a beet, an' her eyebrows hung 'way over heavy. Sez I, 'Hed a fine time at the weddin, didn't yu?' 'Yu mus' be durn'd fool,' wer every word she sed. I hadent gone a hundred yards, ontil I met Missis Brady, her hans fat, an' her ankils swelled ontil they shined. Sez she,—

" 'Whar yu gwine, Sut?'

" 'Bee huntin,' sez I.

" 'Yu jis' say bees agin, yu infunel gallinipper, an' I'll scab yer head wif a rock.'

"Now haint hit strange how tetchus they am, on the subjick ove bees?

"Ove all the durn'd misfortinit weddins ever since ole Adam married that heifer, what wer so fon' ove talkin tu snaix, an' eatin appils, down ontil now, that one ove Sicily's an' Clapshaw's wer the worst one fur noise, disappintment, skeer, breakin things, hurtin, trubbil, vexashun ove spirrit, an' gineral swellin. Why, George, her an' him cudent sleep tugether fur ni ontu a week, on account ove the doins ove them ar hot-

footed, 'vengeful, 'bominabil littil insex. They never will gee tugether, got tu bad a start, mine what I tell yu. Yu haint time now tu hear how ole Burns finished his bull-ride, an' how I cum tu du that lofty, topliftical speciment ove fas' runnin. I'll tell yu all that, sum other time. Ef eny ove 'em axes after me, tell 'em that I'm over in Fannin, on my way tu Dahlonega. They is huntin me tu kill me, I is fear'd.

"Hit am an orful thing, George, tu be a natral born durn'd fool. Yu'se never 'sperienced hit pussonally, hev yu? Hits made pow'fully agin our famerly, an all owin tu dad. I orter bust my head open agin a bluff ove rocks, an' jis' wud du it, ef I warnt a cussed coward. All my yeathly 'pendence is in these yere laigs—d'ye see 'em? Ef they don't fail, I may turn human sum day, that is sorter human, enuf tu be a Squire, ur school cummisiner. Ef I wer jis' es smart es I am mean, an' ornary, I'd be President ove a Wild Cat Bank in less nor a week. Is sperrits plenty over wif yu?"

McALPIN'S TRIP to CHARLESTON

HAMILTON C. JONES

From The Quarter Race in Kentucky, *ed. by Wm. T. Porter. This story appeared originally in the* Spirit of the Times, *1846, by the author of Cousin Sally Dillard.*

M^c ALPIN'S TRIP to CHARLESTON

HAMILTON C. JONES

IN THE COUNTY of Robinson, in the state of North Carolina, there lived in times past a man by the name of Brooks, who kept a grocery for a number of years, and so had acquired most of the land round him. This was mostly pine barrens, of small value, but nevertheless Brooks was looked up to as a great landholder and big man in the neighbourhood. There was one tract, however, belonging to one Colonel Lamar, who lived in Charleston, that *"jammed in upon him so strong,"* and being withal better in quality than the average of his own domain, that Brooks had long wished to add it to his other broad acres. Accordingly he looked around him and employed, as he expressed it, "the smartest man in the neighbourhood," to wit, one Angus McAlpin, to go to Charleston and negotiate with Colonel Lamar for the purchase of this also. Being provided pretty well with bread, meat, and a bottle *of pale-face,* which were stowed away in a pair of leather saddle-bags, and, like all other great *Plenipotentiaries,* being provided with suitable instructions, Mac mounted a piney-wood-tacky (named Rosum) and hied him off to Charleston. The road was rather longer than Brooks had supposed, or his agent less expeditious, or some bad luck had happened to him, or something was the matter that

Angus did not get back until long after the day had transpired which was fixed on for his return. Brooks in the mean time had got himself into a very fury of impatience. He kept his eyes fixed on the Charleston road—he was crusty towards his customers—harsh towards his wife and children, and scarcely ate or slept for several days and nights, for he had set his whole soul upon buying the Lamar land. One day, however, Angus was descried slowly and sadly wending his way up the long stretch of sandy road that made up to the grocery. Brooks went out to meet him, and, without further ceremony, he accosted him.

"Well, Mac, have you got the land?"

The agent, in whose face was any thing but sunshine, replied somewhat gruffly that "he might let a body get down from his horse before he put at him with questions of business."

But Brooks was in a fever of anxiety and repeated the question—

"Did you get it?"

"Shaw, now, Brooks, don't press upon a body in this uncivil way. It is a long story and I must have time."

Brooks still urged, and Mac still parried the question till they got into the house.

"Now, surely," thought Brooks, "he will tell me." But Mac was not quite ready.

"Brooks," says he, "have you any thing to drink?"

"To be sure I have," said the other, and immediately had some of his best forth-coming. Having moistened his clay, Mac took a seat and his employer another. Mac gave a preliminary hem! He then turned suddenly around to Brooks, looked him straight in the eyes, and slapped him on the thigh—

"Brooks," says he, "was you ever in Charleston?"

"Why, you know I never was," replied the other.

"Well, then, Brooks," says the agent, "you ought to go there. The greatest place upon the face of the earth! They've got houses there on both sides of the road for five miles at a stretch, and d—n the horsetrack the whole way through! Brooks, I think I met five thousand people in a minute, and not a chap would look at me. They have got houses there on wheels. Brooks! I saw one with six horses hitched to it, and a big driver with a

long whip going it like a whirlwind. I followed it down the road for a mile and a half, and when it stopped I looked, and what do you think there was? nothing in it but one little woman sitting up in one corner. Well, Brooks, I turned back up the road, and as I was riding along I sees a fancy looking chap with long curly hair hanging down his back, and his boots as shiney as the face of an up-country nigger! I called him into the middle of the road and asked him a civil question; and a civil question, you know, Brooks, calls for a civil answer all over the world. I says, says I, 'Stranger, can you tell me where Colonel Lamar lives?' and what do you think was his answer—*'Go to h—l, you fool!'*

"Well, Brooks, I knocks along up and down and about, until at last I finds out where Colonel Lamar lived. I gets down and bangs away at the door. Presently the door was opened by as pretty, fine-spoken, well-dressed a woman as ever you seed in your born days, Brooks. *Silk!* Silks *thar* every day, Brooks! Says I, 'Mrs. Lamar, I presume, madam,' says I. 'I am Mrs. Lamar, sir.' 'Well, madam,' says I, 'I have come all the way from North Carolina to see Colonel Lamar—to see about buying a tract of land from him that's up in our parts?' 'Then,' she says, 'Colonel Lamar has rode out in the country, but will be back shortly. Come in, sir, and wait a while. I've no doubt the colonel will soon return,' and she had a smile upon that pretty face of hers that reminded a body of a Spring morning. Well, Brooks, I hitched my horse to a brass thing on the door, and walked in. Well, when I got in I sees the floor all covered over with the nicest looking thing! nicer than any patched-worked bed-quilt you ever seed in your life, Brooks. I was trying to edge along around it, but presently I sees a big nigger come stepping right over it. Thinks I, if that nigger can go it, I can go it, too! So right over it I goes and takes my seat right before a picture, which at first I thought was a little man looking in at the window. Well, Brooks, there I sot waiting and waiting for Colonel Lamar, and *at* last—he didn't come, but they began to bring in dinner. Thinks I to myself, here's a scrape. But I made up my mind to tell her, if she axed me to eat—to tell her with a genteel bow that I *had no occasion to eat.* But, Brooks, she didn't ax me to eat—she axed me if I'd be so good as to carve that turkey for her, and she did it with one of them lovely smiles that makes the cold streaks run down the small of a

feller's back. 'Certainly, madam,' says I, and I walks up to the table—there was on one side of the turkey a great big knife as big as a bowie knife, and a fork with a trigger to it on the other side. Well, I falls to work, and in the first *e*-fort I slashed the gravy about two yards over the whitest table-cloth you ever seed in your life, Brooks! Well! I felt the hot steam begin to gather about my cheeks and eyes. But I'm not a man to back out for trifles, so I makes another *e*-fort, and the darned thing took a flight and lit right in Mrs. Lamar's lap! Well, you see, Brooks, then I was taken with a blindness, and the next thing I remember I was upon the *hath* a-kicking. Well, by this time I began to think of navigating. So I goes out and mounts Rosum, and cuts for North Carolina! Now, Brooks, you don't blame me! Do you?"

A BULLY BOAT and a BRAG CAPTAIN

SOL SMITH

A Story of Steamboat Life on the Mississippi

From The Big Bear of Arkansas, *1845, edited by Wm. T. Porter. See Introduction.*

A BULLY BOAT and a BRAG CAPTAIN

SOL SMITH

DOES ANY one remember the Caravan? She was what would now be considered a slow boat;—*then* [1827] she was regularly advertised as the "fast running," etc. Her regular trips from New Orleans to Natchez were usually made in from six to eight days; a trip made by her in five days was considered remarkable. A voyage from New Orleans to Vicksburg and back, including stoppages, generally entitled the officers and crew to a month's wages. Whether the Caravan ever achieved the feat of a voyage to the Falls (Louisville), I have never learned; if she did, she must have "had a *time* of it!"

It was my fate to take passage in this boat. The Captain was a good-natured, easy-going man, careful of the comfort of his passengers, and exceedingly fond of the *game of brag*. We had been out a little more than five days, and we were in hopes of seeing the bluffs of Natchez on the next day. Our wood was getting low, and night coming on. The pilot on duty *above* (the other pilot held three aces at the time, and was just calling out the Captain, who "went it strong" on three kings), sent down word that the mate had reported the stock of wood reduced to half a cord. The worthy Captain excused himself to the pilot whose watch was *below*,

and the two passengers who made up the party, and hurried to the deck, where he soon discovered, by the landmarks, that we were about half a mile from a wood-yard, which he said was situated "right round yonder point." "But," muttered the Captain, "I don't much like to take wood of the yellow-faced old scoundrel who owns it—he always charges a quarter of a dollar more than any one else; however, there's no other chance." The boat was pushed to her utmost, and in a little less than an hour, when our fuel was about giving out, we made the point, and our cables were out and fastened to trees, alongside of a good-sized wood-pile.

"Hollo, Colonel! how d'ye sell your wood *this* time?"

A yellow-faced old gentleman, with a two weeks' beard, strings over his shoulders holding up to his armpits a pair of copperas-coloured linsey-woolsey pants, the legs of which reached a very little below the knee; shoes without stockings; a faded, broad-brimmed hat, which had once been black, and a pipe in his mouth—casting a glance at the empty guards of our boat, and uttering a grunt as he rose from fastening our "spring line," answered.

"Why, Capting, we must charge you *three and a quarter* THIS *time.*"

"The d—l!" replied the Captain—(Captains did swear a little in those days). "What's the odd *quarter* for, I should like to know? You only charged me *three* as I went down."

"Why, Capting," drawled out the wood-merchant, with a sort of leer on his yellow countenance, which clearly indicated that his wood was as good as sold, "wood's riz since you went down two weeks ago; besides, you are awar that you very seldom stop going *down;*—when you're going *up,* you're sometimes ableeged to give me a call, becaze the current's aginst you and there's no other wood-yard for nine miles ahead; and if you happen to be nearly out of fooel, why"—

"Well, well," interrupted the Captain, "we'll take a few cords, under the circumstances"—and he returned to his game of brag.

In about half an hour we felt the Caravan commence paddling again. Supper was over, and I retired to my upper berth, situated alongside and overlooking the brag-table, where the Captain was deeply engaged, having now the *other* pilot as his principal opponent. We jogged on quietly—and seemed to be going at a good rate.

"How does that wood burn?" inquired the Captain of the mate, who was looking on at the game.

" 'Tisn't of much account, I reckon," answered the mate—"it's cotton-wood, and most of it green at that."

"Well, Thompson—(three aces, again, stranger—I'll take that X and the small change, if you please—it's your deal)—Thompson, I say, we'd better take three or four cords at the next wood-yard—it can't be more than six miles from here—(two aces and a bragger, with the age! hand over those V's)."

The game went on and the paddles kept moving. At 11 o'clock, it was reported to the Captain that we were nearing the wood-yard, the light being distinctly seen by the pilot on duty.

"Head her in shore, then, and take in six cords, if it's good—see to it, Thompson, I can't very well leave the game now—it's getting right warm! This pilot's beating us all to smash."

The wooding completed, we paddled on again. The Captain seemed somewhat vexed, when the mate informed him that the price was the same as at the last wood-yard—*three and a quarter;* but soon again became interested in the game.

From my upper berth (there were no state-rooms *then*) I could observe the movements of the players. All the contention appeared to be between the Captain and the pilots (the latter personages took it turn and turn about, steering and playing brag), *one* of them almost invariably winning, while the two passengers merely went through the ceremony of dealing, cutting, and paying up their *"anties."* They were anxious to *learn the game*—and they *did* learn it! Once in awhile, indeed, seeing they had two aces and a bragger, they would venture a bet of five or ten dollars, but they were always compelled to back out before the tremendous bragging of the Captain *or* pilot—or if they *did* venture to "call out" on "two bullits and a bragger," they had the mortification to find one of the officers had the same kind of a hand, and were *more venerable!* Still, with all these disadvantages, they continued playing—they wanted to learn the game.

At 2 o'clock, the Captain asked the mate how we were getting on.

"Oh, pretty glibly, sir," replied the mate, "we can scarcely tell what

headway we *are* making, for we are obliged to keep the middle of the river, and there is the shadow of a fog rising. This wood seems rather better than that we took in at old yellow-face's, but we're nearly out again, and must be looking out for more. I saw a light just ahead on the right —shall we hail?"

"Yes, yes," replied the Captain, "ring the bell and ask 'em what's the price of wood up here?—I've got you again; here's double kings."

I heard the bell and the pilot's hail: "What's *your* price for wood?"

A youthful voice on the shore answered: "Three *and* a quarter!"

"D—n it!" ejaculated the Captain, who had just lost the price of two cords to the pilot—the strangers suffering *some* at the same time—"Three and a quarter again! Are we *never* to get to a cheaper country? deal, sir, if you please—better luck next time." The other pilot's voice was again heard on deck—

"How much *have* you?"

"Only about ten cords, sir," was the reply of the youthful salesman.

The Captain here told Thompson to take six cords, which would last till daylight—and again turned his attention to the game.

The pilots here changed places. *When did they sleep?*

Wood taken in, the Caravan again took her place in the middle of the stream, paddling on as usual.

Day at length dawned. The brag-party broke up, and settlements were being made, during which operation the Captain's bragging propensities were exercised in cracking up the speed of his boat, which, by his reckoning, must have made at least sixty miles, and *would* have made many more, if he could have procured good wood. It appears the two passengers, in their first lesson, had incidentally lost one hundred and twenty dollars. The Captain, as he rose to see about taking in some *good* wood, which he felt sure of obtaining, now he had got above the level country, winked at his opponent, the pilot, with whom he had been on very bad terms during the progress of the game, and said, in an under-tone,—"Forty a-piece for you and I and James (the other pilot) is not bad for one night."

I had risen, and went out with the Captain, to enjoy a view of the bluffs. There was just fog enough to prevent the vision taking in more than sixty yards—so I was disappointed in *my* expectation. We were nearing

the shore for the purpose of looking for wood, the banks being invisible from the middle of the river.

"There it is!" exclaimed the Captain, "stop her!"—Ding—ding—ding! went the big bell, and the Captain hailed:

"Hollo! the wood-yard!"

"Hollo yourself!" answered a squeaking female voice, which came from a woman with a petticoat over her shoulders in place of a shawl.

"What's the price of wood?"

"I think you ought to know the price by this time," answered the old lady in the petticoat—"it's three and a qua-a-rter! and now you know it."

"Three and the d—l!" broke in the Captain "—what, have you raised on *your* wood too! I'll give you *three,* and not a cent more."

"Well," replied the petticoat, "here comes the old man—*he'll* talk to you."

And sure, enough, out crept from the cottage the veritable faded hat, copperas-coloured pants, yellow countenance, and two weeks' beard we had seen the night before, and the same voice we had heard regulating the price of cotton-wood squeaked out the following sentence, accompanied by the same leer of the same yellow countenance;

"Why darn it all, Capting, here is but three or four cords left, and *since it's you,* I don't care if I *do* let you have it for *three—as you're a good customer!"*

After a quick glance at the landmarks around, the Captain bolted, and turned in to take some rest.

The fact became apparent—the reader will probably have discovered it some time since—that *we had been wooding all night at the same wood-yard!*

OLD SINGLETIRE

the Man That Was

NOT ANNEXED

ROBERT PATTERSON, ESQ.,
OF LOUISIANA

From The Quarter Race in Kentucky, *1846, edited by Wm. T. Porter. This sketch appeared originally in the* Louisiana Intelligencer *and was reprinted in the* Spirit of the Times, *1845.*

OLD SINGLETIRE
the Man That Was
NOT ANNEXED

ROBERT PATTERSON

A good story is told of this bold frontiersman, who had made himself notorious, and given his character the *bend sinister*, by frequent depredations on both sides the boundary line between Texas and the United States. The old fellow had migrated thither from parts unknown, years since, knew every foot of country for fifty miles on either side in his vicinity, and had communication by runners with many *"birds of the same feather,"* then common in the region.

The old fellow saw, with sorrow and regret, the rapid influx of population within the last ten years, and was compelled gradually to narrow his sphere of *usefulness,* for, said he, "People's a gittin too thick about me—tha and their varmints and critters is fillin up the woods and spilin the huntin—and then tha aint no chance for a fellar to *speculate* upon travellers as tha used to be when tha wan't any body to watch a fellar: why, tha is getten to be so *civylizated* that a fellar can't drink a barrel of double-rectified 'thout havin' em all abusin' him about it—and then ef he does happen jist by accident to drap half an ounce of lead into a feller, why tha is all up in arms about it. Now t'other day when I wanted to mark Joe Sliteses' ears like tha marks their hogs, 'case he called me a *villyan,* they wanted to *jewdicate* me afore the court. But cuss 'em for a set

of blasted fools they aint a gwoin to fool 'Old Singletire' ef he is a gitten old and aint as quick on the trigger as he used to was.

"Blast their skins, I don't care ef tha *does* annexate Texas! I'll show 'em somethin—tho' tha thinks tha is got me slick when tha git the two countries wedged up into one—but I'll fix em, I'll quit and go to Arkansaw—whar a decent white man kin live 'thout bein' pestered, and bused and *jewdicated!*"

"Old Single" as he was called, *for short,* had several years previous to the late discussion of the annexation question, with singular 'cuteness ascertained the precise line dividing the two territories, and built his cabin thereon in such a position that when lying down—*he slept, one half in the United States, and the other half in Texas,* for he lay at right angles with the line.

The authorities of both sides had frequently found him in that position, but as their separate claims lay severally on the *entire* individual, they were not content to arrest *one half of him* at a time. A great deal of courtesy was at times exhibited by the officers, each pressing the other to break the forms of international law by pulling Old Single bodily over either side of the line. Each was up to trap, and feared the other wished to trick him, and declined the effort which might cause a rupture between Texas and the Union.

On one occasion they were exceedingly pressing on the subject, at first politely so, then teasing each other, and then daring by taunt, and jeer, and jibe, until they worked themselves into such furious excitement that "Old Single," their pretended victim, had to command and preserve the peace—"Gentle-*men,*" said he, "you may fun, and fret, and quarrel jist as much as you please in my house—but when tha is any lickin to be done 'bout these diggins, why 'Old Single' is *thar sure!*—so look out boys, ef you strikes you *dies:*—show your sense, make friends, and let's *liker.* You," nodding to one, "hand me a gourd of water; and, You," to another, "pass that bottle and I'll drink to your better 'quaintance."

The day passed, "Old Single," crosses the line, and one of the *beauties* on each side his coat, all going it like forty at twenty-deck poker—a sociable game as Sol. Smith says—and as remarked our informant, "the old man was a perfect *Cumanche horse* at any game whar tha was *curds.*"

For the last three months "Old Single" had been mightily distressed—*"mighty oneasy bout annexation"*—for he knew he would be compelled to travel—well, the news of the action of Texas on this great question was received in "Old Single's" vicinity on 29th of June—the day it reached Fort Jessup. .

Next morning "the boys" from Boston and De Kalb, a couple of border villages—after a gory gathering about annexation, determined to storm "Old Single" and *"rout"* him. They accordingly, *en masse a-la-regulator,* started off for his cabin, and on arriving near it, a consultation was held, and it was determined that bloodshed was useless—as it was certain to occur if violence was resorted to—and that a flag of truce should be sent into the fortress, offering terms.

The old man was found in a gloomy mood, with a pack strapped to his back, in woodsman style. "Old *Centresplit,* his friend of thirty years' standing, his rifle, his favourite—his all—was laid across his knee, and he in deep thought, his eyes resting on vacancy. As the delegation entered, he looked up, "Well, boys, the time is *cum,* and Texas and you is annixated, *but I aint, and I aint a gwoin to be nuther!—so take care how you raise my dander; I can shoot sum yet!"*

The party explained, and it was agreed the old fellow should take up the march *upon the line* for the nearest point on Red River, the party escorting him at twenty paces distant on either side—that the last mile should be run—that if he struck the water's edge first, he should go free—if otherwise, he was to be taken and rendered up a victim to the offended dignity of the laws. *"Agreed,"* said Old Single, "it's a bargain. Boys, tha is a *gallon* in that barrel, let's finish it in a friendly way, and then travel." The thing was done, the travel accomplished, and the race, fast and furious, was being done. The old fellow led the crowd, hallooing at his topmost voice as he gained the river—"Hoopee!—Hurrah!—*I aint* annixated! *—I'm off—I aint nowhar—nuther in the States nor Texas,* BUT IN ARKANSAW!!!" swam to the opposite shore, fired a volley, gave three cheers, and retired victorious.

THE THIMBLE GAME

T. W. LANE

From Polly Peablossom's Wedding, *edited by T. A. Burke. This sketch appeared originally in the Georgia* Constitutionalist *and was reprinted in the* Spirit of the Times, *1847 Dec. 4.*

THE THIMBLE GAME

T. W. LANE

FORTY YEARS ago, Augusta, Ga., presented a very different appearance from the busy and beautiful city of the present day. Its groceries, stores, and extensive warehouses were few in number, and the large quantities of cotton, and other produce, which are still conveyed thither, were transported entirely by wagons. The substantial railroad, which links it with the richest and most beautiful regions of the empire state of the South, was a chimera, not yet conceived in the wild brain of Fancy herself; and many of the improvements, luxuries, and refinements, which now make it the second city in the state, were then "in the shell." *Yet,* by the honest yeomanry of forty years ago, Augusta was looked upon as Paris and London are now viewed by us. The man who had *never* been there, was a cipher in the community—nothing killed an opinion more surely, nothing stopped the mouth of "argyment" sooner, than the sneering taunt, "Pshaw! you ha'n't been to *Augusty.*" The atmosphere of this favoured place was supposed to impart knowledge and wisdom to all who breathed it, and the veriest ass was a Solon and an umpire, if he could discourse fluently of the different localities, and various wonders, of *Augusty.*

The farmers of the surrounding country paid a yearly visit to Augusta, and having sold their *"crap"* of the great Southern staple, and laid in their

stock of winter necessaries, returned home with something of that holy satisfaction with which the pious Mohammedan turns his face homeward from Mecca. The first step upon arriving in the city was to lay aside their *"copperas-coloureds,"* fabrics of the wife's or daughter's loom, and purchase a new suit of *"store*-clothes." These were immediately donned, and upon returning home, were carefully embalmed, nor again permitted to see the light until the next Sunday at "meetin'," when the farmer, with head erect and ample shirt-collar, strutted up the aisle, the lion of the occasion, the "observed of all observers" till the next Sabbath, when his neighbour returning with *his* new suit, plucked off his laurels and twined them green and blooming upon the crown of his own shining beaver. These annual trips were *the event* and *era* of the year, and the farmer returned to his home, big with importance and news. The dishonesty and shrewdness of "them Gimblit fellers" (Cotton-Buyers), the extortions of hotel-keepers, the singular failures of warehouse steelyards to make cotton-bales weigh as much in Augusta as at home, the elegant apparel of the city belles and beaux, and the sights and scenes which greeted their astonished gaze, formed the year's staple of conversation and discussion; and it would be difficult to say who experienced the greater delight —the farmer in relating his wondrous adventures, or his wife and daughters in listening to them with open-mouths, uplifted hands, and occasional breathless ejaculations of "Good Lord look down!" "Oh! go away!" or "Shut up!" "You don't ses so!"

Early in the fall of 18—, farmer Wilkins announced to his son Peter, that as he, "his daddy," would be too busy to make the usual trip in "propria persona," he, Peter, must get ready to go down to Augusty and sell the "first load." Now Peter Wilkins, Jun., a young man just grown, was one of the celebrities of which his settle*ment* (neighbourhood) boasted. He was supposed to have cut his eye-teeth—to have shaken off that verdancy so common to young men; and while he filled up more than half his father's capacious heart, to the discomfiture of Mahaly (his mother), and Suke and Poll (his sisters), he was the pet and darling of the whole neighbourhood. An only son, the old man doted upon him as a chip of the old block, and was confident that Peter, in any emergency of trade, traffic, or otherwise, would display that admirable tact, and that attentive

consideration for "No. One," for which Mr. P. Wilkins, Sr., was noted. A horse-swap with a Yankee, in which Peter, after half an hour's higgling, found himself the undisputed owner of both horses and ten dollars to boot, was the corner-stone of his fame. Every trip to Augusta added another block; and by the time Peter arrived at the years of discretion, he stood upon a lofty structure with all the green rubbed off, the pride of his family and the universal favourite of his acquaintances. The night before his departure the family were all gathered around the roaring fire, Mrs. and the Misses Wilkins engaged in ironing and mending our hero's Sunday apparel, the old man smoking his pipe, and occasionally preparing Peter for the ordeal in Augusta, by wholesome advice, or testing his claim to the tremendous confidence about to be reposed in him, by searching questions, as to how he would do in case so-and-so was to turn up. To this counsel, however, our hero paid less attention than to the preparations around him for his comely appearance in the city. Nor, until he got upon the road, did he revolve in his mind the numerous directions of his father, or resolve to follow to the letter his solemn parting injunction to "bewar of them gimblit fellers down to Augusty." "Durn it," said he to himself, as the thought of being "sold" crossed his mind, "durn it, they'll never make gourds out o' me. I've bin to Augusty *before,* and ef I don't git as much fur that thur cotton as anybody else does fur thurn, then my name ain't Peter Wilkins, and that's what the old 'ooman's slam book says it is."

Arrived in the city, he drove around to one of the warehouses, and stood against the brick wall, awaiting a purchaser. Presently a little man with a long gimlet in his hand came out, and bade our hero a polite "Good morning."

"Mornin'," said Peter, with admirable coolness, as he deliberately surveyed the little man from head to foot, and withdrew his eyes as if not pleased with his appearance. The little man was dressed in the "shabby-genteel" style, a costume much in vogue at that day among men of his cloth, as combining plainness enough for the country-folk, with sufficient gentility to keep them on speaking terms with the more fashionable denizens of the then metropolis. The little man seemed in no way disconcerted by Peter's searching gaze, and a close observer might have per-

ceived a slight smile on his lip, as he read the thoughts of our hero's bosom. His self-confidence, his pride, his affected ease and knowing air, were all comprehended, and ere a word had passed the lion knew well the character of his prey. In the purchase of the cotton, however, the little man sought no advantage, and even offered our hero a better price than any one else in the city would have given him. To our hero's credit be it said, he was not loath to accept the offer; 15½ cents was above the market, by at least a quarter, and the old man had told him to let it slide at fifteen rather than not sell, so the bargain was closed, and our hero and the "Gimblit-man" went out into the yard to settle.

Seating himself on a cotton bale, the buyer counted out the money, which our hero made safe in his pocket, after seeing that it was "giniwine," and tallied with the amount stated in the bill of sale. A few sweet pills of flattery administered to our hero, soon made him and the Gimblit-man sworn friends; and it was in consideration of his high regard, that the Gimblit-man consented to initiate him into the mysteries of a certain game, yclept "Thimble Rig," a game which, our hero was told, would yield him much sport, if successfully played up at home among the boys; and would, when properly managed, be to him a never-failing source of that desirable article, "pocket-change." To this proposition our hero readily assented, delighted with the idea of playing off upon the boys up at home, who hadn't been to Augusty; and already began to revel in the visions of full pockets, when, to his silent horror, the little man took from his pocket a hundred-dollar bill, and very irreverently rolled it into a small round ball.

Three thimbles were next produced, and the game began.

"Now," said the little man, "I am going to hide this little ball under one of these thimbles, all before your eyes, and I want you to guess where it is."

"Well," said Peter, "go it—I'm ready," and the shifting game began. To the apparent astonishment of the little man, our hero guessed right every time. No matter how rapid the changes, Peter invariably lifted the thimble from the ball, and had begun to grow disgusted with the game, little dreaming how soon he was to prove its efficacy as a source of revenue, when the little man suddenly checked his hand.

"Wrong," said he, with a friendly smile; "the ball is not under the middle thimble, but under that next you."

"Darned ef it is though!" responded Peter; "I ain't as green as you Gusty folks thinks. Blamed ef I don't know whar that ball is jist as well as you does, and dod-drapped ef I don't bet four hundred and fifty-one dollars no cents (the price of the cotton) agin the load o' cotton, that it's under the middle thimble."

"No, *sir,*" said the little man, with another smile, "you are wrong, and I'd hate to win your money."

That smile deceived Peter—it manifested a friendly consideration for his welfare, which he felt he did not need, and after bullying the "Gimblit-man" for a few minutes, he succeeded in inveigling him (as he thought) into a bet, which was duly closed and sealed, to the entire satisfaction of his *friend!* Alas for poor Peter! he had awakened the wrong passenger. But the idea of being too smart for an Augusty feller, and he was sure he had cornered one this time, was too great a temptation for him to withstand. "Drot it," said he to himself, "I seen him put it under that ere middle thimble, I seen it myself, and I know it's thar, and why not win the old man's cotton back when it's jest as easy as nothin? And ef I do win it, why in course the old man can't claim more'n four hundred and fifty-one dollars, no how. (Peter forgot that the profits to be realized ought of course to belong to the owner of the capital invested.) The time me and that Yankee swapped critters, warn't I thar? Hain't I cut my gums? Don't the old man, yes, and all the settle*ment,* say I'm smart, and then thar's Kitty Brown, I reckon she ort to know, and don't she say I'm the peertest feller in our parts? I've bin to Augusty, and this time, dod-drapped ef I don't leave my mark."

The result we need hardly relate. Peter was tempted—tempted sorely, and he fell. Sick at heart, he ordered Bob, the driver, to turn his mules homeward, and late on Saturday evening he entered the lane which led to his father's house. The blow was now to come; and some time before the wagon got to the house, Peter saw his father, and mother, and sisters, coming out to meet him. At last they met.

"Well, son," said the old man, "I s'pose you've been well." Here Mrs. Wilkins and the gals commenced hugging and kissing Peter, which he

took very coolly, and with the air of a man who felt he was getting a favour which he didn't deserve.

"Reasonably well," said Peter, in reply to his father's question; "but I've lost it."

"Lost what?" said his father.

"Lost *it.*"

"Lost the dockyments?" said the old man.

"No, here they are," said Peter, handing the papers containing the weights of his cotton, to his father, who began to read, partly aloud, and partly to himself—

"Eight bags of cotton—350—400—348—550—317—15½ cents a pound—sold to Jonathan Barker. Very good sale," said he; "I knowed you'd fix things rite, Peter." The wagon by this time had reached the house, and turning to Bob, the old man told him to put the molasses in the cellar, and the sugar and coffee in the house.

"Ain't got no 'lasses, massa," said Bob, grinning from ear to ear.

"No," said Peter, "we havn't got none; we lost it."

"Lost it! How on airth could you lose a barrel of molasses?"

"We never had it," said Bob.

"Heavens and airth!" said the old man, turning first to Bob and then to Peter, "What do you mean? What do you mean? *What, what,* w-h-a-t in the d-e-v-i-l *do* you mean?"

"Gracious marster! Mr. Wilkins, don't swar so," said his wife, by way of helping Peter out.

"Swar!" said the farmer, "do you call *that* swarring? Darned ef I don't say wussin that d'recley, ef they don't tell me what they mean."

"Why, father," said Peter, "I've lost it. I've lost the money."

"Well, and couldn't you find it?"

"I didn't lose it that way," said Peter.

"You ain't been a gamblin' I hopes," said the old man; "you ain't been runnin' agin none of them Pharo banks down to Augusty, is you?"

"Bring me three thimbles," said Peter, "and I'll show you how I lost it."

The thimbles were brought, and Peter sat down to explain. It was a scene for a painter; there sat our hero, fumbling with the thimbles and the ball, but too much frightened to have performed the trick if he had

known how; his father sat next him, with his chin upon his hands, looking as if undecided whether to reprimand him at once, or to give him a "fair showin'." Mrs. Wilkins stood just behind her husband, winking and smiling, gesturing and hemming, in order to attract Peter's attention, and indicate to him her willingness to stand between him and his father. The girls, who always sided with their mother, followed her example in this case. But their efforts to attract his attention were useless; they could not even catch his eye, so busy was he in trying to arrange the ball and thimbles; but every time he got them fixed, and told his father to guess, the old man would guess right, which, while it astonished Peter, incensed the old man against him. It looked so easy to him, that he could not help "blaming Pete fur bein' sich a fool."

"Shorely," said the farmer, after Peter had finished his explanation. "Shorely it aint *possible* that you've bin to Augusty *so often* and didn't know no better. Didn't I tell you not to have nothin to do with them *Gimblit Fellers?* Ther ain't one of 'em honest, not one. Like a fool, you've gone and lost jest four hundred and fifty-one dollars no cents. It aint the munny that I keers for, Peter, it's you bein' sich a fool—*four hundred and fifty-one dollars no cents.* I'll go right down to Augusty next Monday and find this here Barker, and ef he don't give up the munny, I'll have a *say so* (ca. sa.) taken agin him, and march him rite off to jail—no deafallication about that. The theavin' rascal, gwine about cheetin' people's sons outin four hundred and fifty-one dollars no cents! How often is you bin to Augusty, Peter?"

"Sixteen times," said Peter.

"Well, I declare," said the old man, "bin to Augusty sixteen times, and didn't know no better than to go thar agin and lose four hundred and fifty-one dollars no cents."

Early on Monday morning the old man started to Augusta with another load of cotton, Bob driving as before, and his master riding his gray mare "Bets." Mr. Wilkins had a great many little commissions to execute for his wife and the "gals." The old lady wanted a pair of spectacles, and the gals a bonnet each—ribbons and flowers, thread, buttons, &c., had to be purchased, and the good farmer was nearly crazed by the loss he had met with, and the multiplicity of things to be attended to. Ever and anon, as

he trotted along the road, he would mutter to himself something as follows:

"Leghorn bonnet for Sal—12 skeins of flax thread—2 dozen pearl buttons for pants—5 grass petticoats—100 pounds coffee—451 dollars no cents—Jonathan Barker—bin to Augusty sixteen times—1 bolt kaliker—Pete's a fool—lost one barrel of molasses and 451 dollars no cents." With such words as these he would while away the time, apparently unconscious of the presence of Bob, who was much diverted by his master's soliloquy. As they approached Augusta his wrath seemed to increase, and he vented his spleen on his old mare and Bob. "Bob," said he, "you daddratted rascal, why don't you drive up—you don't do nothin' but set thar and sleep. Take *that,* and *that,* and *that,*" he would say to his mare, accompany each word with a blow; *"git up, Miss, and go long to Augusty."*

When they had come in sight of Augusta, Bob struck a camp, and his master rode on into town. Having eaten his supper, and put up his horse, he retired for the night, and early in the morning started out to look for Jonathan Barker. He caused not a little laughter as he walked along the streets, relating his troubles, and inquiring of everybody for Jonathan Barker.

"Where's Jonathan Barker," he would cry out, "the Gimblit Feller what cheeted Pete out'n 451 dollars no cents. Jes show me Jonathan Barker."

As a last hope, he went around to the warehouse, where his son had lost the cotton. Walking out into the yard, he bawled out the name of Jonathan Barker. A little man with a long gimlet in his hand, answered to the name, and our farmer attacked him as follows:

"Look a here, Mr. Barker, I wants that money."

"What money?" said Barker, who had no acquaintance whatever with the farmer. "What money is it, sir?"

"Oh no," said the old man, perfectly furious at such barefaced assurance. *"Oh no! you don't know nuthin now.* Blame your picter, you're as innersent as a lam. Don't know what munny I MEEN? It's that four hundred and fifty-one dollars, and *no* cents, what you cheeted Pete out'n."

"I recollect now," said Barker, "that was fairly done, sir—if you'll just step this way I'll show you how I got it, sir."

A bright idea struck the old man. I've seen Pete play it, thought he to himself, and I guessed *rite every time*. "Well," said he, "I'll go and see how it was done, ennyhow." The two walked along to the same bale of cotton which had witnessed the game before, and the gimlet man took the identical thimbles and ball which had served him before, from his pocket, and sat down, requesting the farmer to be seated also.

"Now, sir," said Barker, "when your son was here, I bought his cotton and paid him for it—just as he was going away, I proposed showing him a trick worth seeing. I took this little ball and put it under this middle thimble; now, said I to him, you see it, and now you don't see it, and I'll bet you you can't tell where the little joker is."

"Well," said the farmer, "all's rite—the ball's now under the middle thimble."

"When I had put it under there," continued Barker, "your son wanted to bet me that it was under the middle thimble."

"So it is," said the old man, interrupting him.

"No," returned Barker, "it's under the one next you."

"I tell you it ain't," said Mr. Wilkins, who strongly advocated the doctrine that 'seeing is believing.' He was sure he was right, and now a chance presented itself of regaining his former load of cotton. "I tell you it ain't. I'm harder to head than Pete wus, and blamed ef I don't bet another load o' cotton that's at the dore by this time."

"You are mistaken," said Barker, smiling, "but if you wish it, I'll bet."

"Let's understand one nuther fust," said the farmer. "You say that ere little ball you had jes now, ain't under the little thimble in the middle—I say it is. Ef it ain't, I'm to give you the load o' cotton—ef it is, you're to give me four hundred and fifty-one dollars no cents."

"Exactly so," said Barker.

"Well, I'll bet," said the farmer, "and here's my hand."

The bet was sealed, and with a triumphant air which he but poorly concealed, the farmer snatched up the middle thimble, but no ball was there.

"Well, I'll be dod drapt!" he exclaimed, at the same time drawing a long breath, and dropping the thimble. "Derned ef it's *thar!* Four hundred and fifty-one dollars no cents gone *agin!* Heven and airth, what'll Mahaly and the gals say! I'll never heer the eend of it tell I'm in my

grave. Then thar's Pete! *Gee-mi-my! jest* to think o' Pete—fur *him* to know his ole daddy wus made a fool of too! four hundred and fifty-one dollars and no cents! but I wouldn't keer *that* for it," snapping his fingers, "ef it wern't fur Pete."

The Gimblit-man reminded our friend of the result of his bet, by telling him that the sooner he unloaded the better.

"Now you ain't, shore nuff, in *yearnest,*" said the old man.

"Dead earnest," returned Barker.

"Well, stranger," added our friend, "I'se a honest man, and stands squar up to my contracts."

With this he had his cargo discharged into the street, and ordering Bob to drive on, he mounted his mare, and set out for home with a heavier heart than he had ever known before. 'Twere useless to attempt a description of the scene which transpired on the farmer's return home. The first words he uttered were, "Pete, durned ef I hain't lost it too." The misfortunes of his trip were soon all told, after which Peter and his father wisely resolved never to bet on anything again, especially "them blamed Yankee Thimbles." It is not to be supposed that Mrs. Wilkins, Pete, or the gals, could help teasing the old man occasionally on the result of his trip. Whenever he became refractory, his wife would stick her thimble on the end of her finger, and hold it up for him to look at—it acted like a charm! His misadventure, too, raised higher than ever his opinion of the cunning and sagacity of *"them Augusty Fellers!"*

A few years succeeding the events which we have attempted to narrate, and Farmer Wilkins was gathered to his fathers; but his trip to Augusta is still preserved as a warning to all honest and simple-hearted people. The last words of the old man to his son, were, "Peter, Peter, my son, always be honest, never forgit your ole daddy, and *allers bewar* of them Gimblit Fellers, *down to Augusty.*"

Reader! every tale has its moral, nor is ours without one. Not only did Peter learn from his adventure in Augusta, the evils of betting, but ever since the time to which we have alluded, he always allows his factor to sell his cotton for him. Whatever you may think of it, both Peter and his father came to the conclusion that there was "no use in tryin' to git the upper hand of one o' them *Gimblit Fellers down to Augusty.*"

THAT BIG DOG FIGHT

at

MYERS'S

A MISSISSIPPIAN

A Story of Mississippi

From The Big Bear of Arkansas, *1845, edited by Wm. T. Porter. The author, Phillip B. January, a planter of Mississippi, "has the keenest perception of the ludicrous imaginable."*

THAT BIG DOG FIGHT at MYERS'S

P. B. JANUARY

WELL, THEM was great times, and *men* lived about here, them days, too!—not sayin' they're all dead, but the settlements is got too thick for 'em to splurge, an' they are old—beside, they're watin' for thar *boys* to do somethin' when they gits *men!* I tell you what, if they lived till kingdom come *they* wouldn't be men. I'd like to see one single one of 'em that ever rid his horse up two pair of stairs, jumpt him thru—"

"Stop, stop, Uncle Johnny! Do tell us about *that big dog fight at Myers's.*"

"Ha, ha, boy! *You* thar? Had your bitters yet? Well, well—we'll take 'em together; licker *is* better now than it used to was; but people don't drink so much, and that's strange! ain't it? Well, I was talkin' to these men about old Greensville, and about them same men, for they was all at that same dog fite—Featte, the Devil! never be a patchin' to what old Greensville was about the times *'Old Col'* was sheriff! I'll just bet all the licker I ever *expect* to drink, that thar ain't no second story in Featte that's got hoss tracks on the floor and up agin' the ceil—"

"I must stop you again, Uncle Johnny; Fayette is yet in its youth, and promises—"

"Youth, H—l! yes, like the *youth* of some of my old friends' sons—upwards of thirty, an' they're expectin' to make *men* out'n 'em yet! I tell you what, young men in *my* time'd just get in a spree, sorter open thar shirt collars, and shuck tharselves with a growl, and come out reddy-made men; and most on 'em has *staid* reddy for fifty-one year! I ain't failed now, yet, and—"

"Uncle Johnny, for God's sake stick to the dog story: we'll hear all this after—"

"Ah, you boy, you never will let me tell a story *my* way, but here goes:—Let me see—yes, yes. Well, it was a grate day in Greensville, anyhow—Charly Cox had run old Saltrum agin' a hoss from the Red-licks, and beat him shameful—Run rite plum up the street in Greensville so as evry body mite see. Well, a power of licker was wasted—nily evry house in town rid thru—women and children skeared out, and evry drink we took was a *ginral* invite, and about night thar was *one* ginral *in town—Ginral Intoxication.* Well, 'bout sundown the old Ginral—God bless him!—called up his troops; some of the same ones who was at Orleans; let's see—thar was the high sheriff, Dick, Bat, Jim, old Iron Tooth, an'—"

"Iron Tooth! who'se he?" suggested I.

"Why, *he's* the man what fit the dog! Ain't you never seen a man here in Featte, when he gits *high* up, just pulls out his knife, and goes to chawin' it as if he'd made a bet he could bite it in two?"

"Yes, yes, go on."

"Well, the Ginral made 'em all mount, formed line, and rid rite into the grocery—formed line agin, had a big stir-up drink handed to 'em all, and when the Ginral raised *his* hat and said 'the Hero of Orleans,' the yell that went up, put a bead on that man's licker that staid nily a month, I hearn. We come a rarin' out'n the grocery—charged up and down two or three times, cleared the streets of all *weak* things, than started out home, all in a brest; evry one of us had a Polk stalk—"

"Hel-lo!—Polk stalks that early?"

"Well, well, Hickry sticks—same thing—out of town we went, chargin' evry thing we see—fences, cattle, ox-teams; and at last we got to old Myers's, farly squeelin' to rar over somethin'! Old Myers's dog was awful bad—the worst in anybody's nolledge—why, people sent fifty miles to git

pups from him! Well, he come a chargin', too, and met us at the gate, lookin' like a young hyena. Iron Tooth just turned himself round to us, and says he, 'Men, I'll take *this* fite off'n *your* hands'; so down he got, ondressed to his shirt, *stock,* and boots—got down on his all-fours in the road, walkin' backards and forards, pitchin' up the dust and bellerin' like a bull! When the dog see him at that sort of work, he *did* sorter stop barkin', but soon as he see *our* animal strut up to the gate, and begin to smell then, like another dog, he got fairly crazy to git thru at him; rarin', cavortin', and *tarin'* off pickets! Our animal was a takin' all this quite easy—smellin' thru at him, whinin' *me-you, me-you, me-you*—struttin' backards and forards, histin' up one leg agin the gate. Well, after a while the dog begin to git sorter tired, and then *our* animal begin to git mad! snap for snap he gin the dog, and the spit and slobber flew, and soon the dog was worse than he *had* been. Thar we was settin' on our hosses, rollin' with laughin' and licker, and thought the thing was rich, as it was; but just then, our animal riz on his hinders, onlatched the gate, and the dog *lunged* for him. Ain't you never noticed when one dog bounces at another, he sorter whirls roun sideways, to keep him from hittin' him a fair lick? Well, jist so our animal: he whirled round sideways, to let the dog have a glancin' lick, and true to the caracter, he was goin' to allow the dog a dog's chance, and he stuck to his all-fours. The dog didn't make but one lunge, and he stopt—as still as the picter of the wolf in the spellin' book—for you see our animal was right starn end facin' him, his shirt smartly up over his back, and standin' mity high up on his hind legs at that! We all raised the old Indian yell for you never *did* see sich a *site,* and thar stood the dog with the awfullest countenance you ever seen a *dog* ware! Our man, sorter thinkin' he'd bluffed the dog, now give two or three short goat-pitches backards at him! Ha! Ha! ha!"

"What did he do? What did he do?"

"Do? why *run!* wouldn't a d—d hyena run! The dog had a big block and chain to him, and soon our animal was arter him, givin' some of the awfullest leaps and yelps—'twarnt but a little squar picket yard round the house, and the dog couldn't git out, so round and round he went—at last, turnin' a corner the chain rapt round a stump, and thar the dog *was fast, and he had to fite!* But he did give powerful licks to get

loose! When he see his inemy right on him agin, and when Iron Tooth seen the dog *was* fast, round and round he'd strut; and sich struttin! Ain't you never seen one of these big, long-legged, short-tailed baboons struttin' round on top of the lion's cage? Well, so he'd go—sorter smellin' at the dog (and his tongue hanging out right smart, for he *was* tired), *me-you! me-you! Snap!* snap! the dog would go, and he begin to show fite d—d plain agin, for our varmint was a facin' him, and he seen *'twas* a *man* arter all! But our animal know'd how to come the giraffe over *him*—so round he turns and gives him the starn view agin! *That* farly broke the dog's hart, and he jist *rared* back a pullin' and got loose! One or two goat-pitches backards and the dog was flat on his back, playin' his fore-paws mity fast, and perhaps some of the awfullest barks you ever hearn a dog gin! Old Iron Tooth he seen he had the dog at about the rite pint, and he give one mortal lunge backards, and he lit with both hands on the dog's throat, turned quick as lightnin', div down his head, and fastened his teeth on the dog's ears! Sich a shakin and howlin'! The dog was too skeared to fite, and our animal had it all his own way. We hollered to 'give him *some* in the short ribs,' but he only held on and growled at us, playin' the dog clean out, I tell you. Well, thar they was, rollin' and tumblin' in the dirt—first one on top, and then tother—our animal holdin' onlike pitch to a waggin wheel, the dog never thinkin' 'bout fitein' once, but makin' rale onest licks to git loose. At last our varmint's hold broke —the dog riz—make one *tiger* lunge—the chain snapt—he tucked *his* tail, and—and—but you all know what skeared dogs *will* do!

"Nobody ain't never got no pups from Myers since—the blood run rite out!"

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE

ANON.

Neither author nor original source is known. From Polly Peablossom's Wedding, *edited by T. A. Burke.*

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE

ANON.

THERE MAY be readers who will suppose the annexed recital to be an exaggeration; but at least three hundred persons who were in the Capitol of the State of Mississippi on the 3d day of March, 1846, can testify that this account falls far short of the reality. The Clerks of the House, as in duty bound, entered the report of the member from Greene on the journals; but, on the next morning, it was expunged by the House at the request of the member himself.

The best subject which came before the Legislature during the session of 1846, was the all-absorbing one in regard to the charter of "McInnis' Ferry." The owner of the ferry was a member—himself being the representative of his county of Greene—where the ferry is located; and through all the trying scenes of getting the charter through, that honourable representative bore himself in a manner and with a spirit which, to say the least, were remarkable.

On the first broaching of the subject some opposition was made. The representative from Clarke, an adjoining county, conceived that the charter interfered with the rights of other citizens who had ferries on the same river (the Chickasahay), and, on the first reading of the bill, this same representative (Mr. Moody) moved its rejection. This motion

brought Mr. Innis to his feet. He had never spoken before; but in this one effort (his maiden speech) he more than compensated for his former remissness.

"I hope," said he (addressing the House, but not the Speaker), "I hope you will not reject my ferry bill. Gentlemen, *I'm bound to keep a ferry.* Them other men that's got ferries near me, ain't bound at all. They've got some little trifling flats to git across the river on when they want to go to mill—and when it's convenient for 'em to put a traveller over, they do it —and when it ain't, they don't. But *I'm bound to keep a ferry.* Ask Mr. Moody; he knows all about it. He knows I've kept ferry there across the Chickasahay for thirty years past. My ferry's right on the big road to Mobile and everywhere. There's three mails crosses at my ferry. Gentlemen, *I'm bound to keep ferry.* Mr. Moody knows I live at Leaksville, right at the Courthouse—and these fellers that keep the other little ferries—they turn my boats loose, and bore auger holes in 'em and sink 'em. I hope, gentlemen, you'll pass my bill. I've just got a letter from my son last night—a telling me that them fellers has been boring more holes in my boat. Gentlemen, *I'm bound to keep ferry.* I always cross everybody that comes—I'm bound to do it. And I always keep good flats, well painted with tar."

After this appeal and the necessary readings being gone through, the bill passed the House by a large majority, and was sent to the Senate.

Here a novel scene occurred—unprecedented, perhaps, in the annals of legislation—even of Mississippi legislation. By a resolution of the Senate, the representative from Greene was invited to address that august body upon the merits of his bill, which he did after the manner indicated in the above sketch of his remarks in the house. After the grave Senators had sufficiently amused themselves with the matter, they passed the bill. The worthy representative immediately hurried back to his seat in the House; and, although the clerk was reading in the midst of a document, the delighted member exclaimed:

"Mr. Speaker, my ferry bill has passed the Senate, and I want the House to concur!"

A roar of laughter followed this unique announcement.

As soon as the matter in hand was disposed of, there was an obstreper-

ous call by the House that the gentleman from Greene should be heard in regard to his mission to the other branch in the Legislature. Mr. McInnis rose and said:

"Mr. Speaker, the Senate's passed my bill!"

Speaker.—"What! have the Senate passed your ferry bill?"

McInnis.—"Yes, sir; they've passed it."

Speaker.—"Well, I'm very glad to hear that the Senate have passed the ferry bill of the gentleman from Greene."

Mr McInnis proceeded:

"Mr. Speaker, when I went into the Senate I told 'em all about my ferry, and some of 'em hopped on my bill."

[Here there were cries of "Who opposed it? who attacked the ferry bill?"]

"Why, sir, Mr. Ramsey did, and Mr. Labauve, too. Labauve said he was travelling along there once on an electioneering tour, and like many other politicians, he was out of money; and he said I wouldn't set him over at my ferry, because he hadn't no money. I told him, right before the whole Senate, it wasn't so."

Speaker.—"That Labauve is a dangerous fellow to talk to in that way."

McInnis.—"Yes, sir; he said he would throw a glove at me if he had one."

No reporter, whatever his powers be, could do justice to the various scenes which the House and the Senate presented in the progress of the above-mentioned events. The crowding of members and vistors around the seat of the *Greene* representative whenever he rose or opened his mouth—the roars of obstreperous mirth—the painful contortions of the Speaker's face, as he vainly strove to keep himself and the House in an orderly frame. These things all defied description—to say nothing of the greatest curiosity of all—the member from Greene himself.

In the course of an hour or so, a message came from the Senate, stating, among other acts passed, that they had passed the House bill, in regard to the Chickasahay Ferry.

The worthy member again arose—

"Mr. Speaker," said he, "I hope you'll now let me have the bill, to take to the Governor to get him to sign it."

Fortunately, the House was now too busy in discussing some other more important matter, or there would have been another convulsive scene. As it was, there was an incontinent burst of laughter, as sudden as it was universal and overwhelming, and then there was a calm again.

Night came—and new fuel was furnished to feed the slumbering embers of that mirth, which had nearly consumed the House during the day. In the morning a petition had been presented, from Harrison county, by Mr. McCaughn, praying the Legislature to pass a law, providing that lawyers might be elected as other officers are, and compensated out of the State Treasury—forbidding them to receive private fees, &c., &c. On this petition a committee had been appointed—including, singularly enough, the member from Greene.

Judge then, at the surprise of the House, at the promptness of Mr. McInnis, when, at the night session of the very day he was appointed, he rose in his place, and made the following report, which, in due form, was read at the Clerk's desk; but was interrupted at the close of every sentence by shouts of applause and merriment; crowded as the hall was by a brilliant array both of ladies and gentlemen:—

THE REPORT

Of Col. Jack McInnis, from the Select Committee that had Mr. McCaughn's Lawyer Bill put to 'em.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if this house will give me its detention for a few minutes, I think that I can explain this matter.

Mr. McCaughn has introduced a great passel of bills here, which is heredical and null and void, and hasn't got no sense in 'em. He put in a bill here to get up a theorlogical servey of the country, and this my constituents is opposed to, because they think there's no use in it. The people have enough to pay for now, that ain't of no account. There has been a good deal of 'citement about my ferry bill; and when I had used up Mr. Moody, and got it into the Senate, Laboo had to git up and say that he was at my ferry wonst, and I refused to set him over the river, because he didn't have no money—and I jest told him what he said warn't so. Now, I don't know much about this Laboo, but I don't think he is the clean cat fur, no how.

I give my vues about the pennytensherry t'other day, and I was right, for the things there does look like they was painted with tar—and I told the truth about it, and you know it.

Now, Mr. McCaughn is a man of great larning; he can write equal to any man in this House, and I'm 'sprized that as smart a man should have such heredical notions. He wanted to have a law passed here, for doing away with securities; but he couldn't get that fixed, and then he wanted to get the law turned so that a man would have to ax his wife when he wanted to go a feller's security. Now, I have worked for my plunder, and I'm opposed to all such sort of laws. The Legislater has already passed a law, giving a man's wife his plunder, and his hard yearnings, and I believe Mr. McCaughn was the cause of it, for it is jest like one of them heredical laws of hizzen, that we have all hearn so much about.

Now, I think this law bill is a rascally bill—for I believe in letting the people get any lawyer he likes, and pay him what he chuses. And if this bill passes, why these heredical candidates would be always treating and fooling the people, just to get elected. There is too many rascals as is candidates now, and as sech, I'm agin it.

I'm much obleeched to the Legislater for passing my ferry bill. They ought to have passed it, for that man Wally, or somebody else, bored two inch auger holes in my flat, just because I got more ferrying to do than he did; but I've fixed him now, for I've got the best ferry anyhow; and the Senate's agreed to it, for all that fellow Laboo went agin it. And if you'll let me have the bill, I will jest take it right down to the Governor, to sign it. And I will go and raise my sunk ferry boat, and stop the auger holes, and ferry everybody as travels that way; and I'll take the greatest pleasure in crossing the members of this Legislater, because they passed my bill. But I'm agin McCaughn's bill anyhow, for it is time to stop all sich heredical doctrines.

THE HORSE-SWAP

A. B. LONGSTREET

From Georgia Scenes, *1835, by A. B. Longstreet. Poe described it as "a vivid encounter between the wits of two Georgian horse-jockies. This is most excellent in every respect, but especially so in its delineation of Southern bravado, and the keen sense of the ludicrous evinced in the portraiture of the steeds. We think parts of this free and easy sketch of a* hoss *superior, in joint humor and verisimilitude, to anything of the kind we have ever seen." Poe,* Southern Literary Messenger, *March 1836.*

THE HORSE-SWAP

A. B. LONGSTREET

During the session of the Supreme Court in the village of ——, about three weeks ago, when a number of people were collected in the principal street of the village, I observed a young man riding up and down the street, as I supposed, in a violent passion. He galloped this way, then that, and then the other; spurred his horse to one group of citizens, then to another; then dashed off at half-speed, as if fleeing from danger; and, suddenly checking his horse, returned first in a pace, then in a trot, and then in a canter. While he was performing these various evolutions he cursed, swore, whooped, screamed, and tossed himself in every attitude which man could assume on horseback. In short, he cavorted most magnanimously (a term which, in our tongue, expresses all that I have described, and a little more), and seemed to be setting all creation at defiance. As I like to see all that is passing, I determined to take a position a little nearer to him, and to ascertain, if possible, what it was that affected him so sensibly. Accordingly I approached a crowd before which he had stopped for a moment, and examined it with the strictest scrutiny. But I could see nothing in it that seemed to have anything to do with the cavorter. Every man appeared to be in good humor, and all minding their own business. Not one so much as noticed the principal figure. Still he went on. After a

semicolon pause, which my appearance seemed to produce (for he eyed me closely as I approached), he fetched a whoop, and swore that "he could out-swap any live man, woman, or child that ever walked these hills, or that ever straddled horseflesh since the days of old daddy Adam." "Stranger," said he to me, "did you ever see the *Yallow* Blossom from Jasper?"

"No," said I, "but I have often heard of him."

"I'm the boy," continued he; "perhaps a *leetle,* jist a *leetle* of the best man at a horse-swap that ever trod shoe-leather."

I began to feel my situation a little awkward, when I was relieved by a man somewhat advanced in years, who stepped up and began to survey the Yellow Blossom's horse with much apparent interest. This drew the rider's attention, and he turned the conversation from me to the stranger.

"Well, my old coon," said he, "do you want to swap *hosses?"*

"Why, I don't know," replied the stranger; "I believe I've got a beast I'd trade with you for that one, if you like him."

"Well, fetch up your nag, my old cock; you're jist the lark I wanted to get hold of. I am perhaps a *leetle,* jist a *leetle,* of the best man at a horse-swap that ever stole *cracklins* out of his mammy's fat gourd. Where's your *hoss?"*

"I'll bring him presently; but I want to examine your horse a little."

"Oh, look at him," said the Blossom, alighting and hitting him a cut—"look at him! He's the best piece of *hoss*flesh in the thirteen united univarsal worlds. There's no sort o' mistake in little Bullet. He can pick up miles on his feet, and fling 'em behind him as fast as the next man's *hoss,* I don't care where he comes from. And he can keep at it as long as the sun can shine without resting."

During this harangue little Bullet looked as if he understood it all, believed it, and was ready at any moment to verify it. He was a horse of goodly countenance, rather expressive of vigilance than fire; though an unnatural appearance of fierceness was thrown into it by the loss of his ears, which had been cropped pretty close to his head. Nature had done but little for Bullet's head and neck; but he managed, in a great measure, to hide their defects by bowing perpetually. He had obviously suffered

GEORGIA

SCENES, CHARACTERS,

INCIDENTS, &C.

IN THE FIRST HALF CENTURY OF THE REPUBLIC

BY A NATIVE GEORGIAN.

A. B. Longstreet.

Augusta:

PRINTED AT THE S. R. SENTINEL OFFICE.

1835.

severely for corn; but if his ribs and hip-bones had not disclosed the fact, *he* never would have done it; for he was in all respects as cheerful and happy as if he commanded all the corn-cribs and fodder-stacks in Georgia. His height was about twelve hands; but as his shape partook somewhat of that of the giraffe, his haunches stood much lower. They were short, strait, peaked, and concave. Bullet's tail, however, made amends for all his defects. All that the artist could do to beautify it had been done; and all that horse could do to compliment the artist, Bullet did. His tail was nicked in superior style, and exhibited the line of beauty in so many directions that it could not fail to hit the most fastidious taste in some of them. From the root it dropped into a graceful festoon, then rose in a handsome curve, then resumed its first direction, and then mounted suddenly upward like a cypress knee to a perpendicular of about two and a half inches. The whole had a careless and bewitching inclination to the right. Bullet obviously knew where his beauty lay, and took all occasions to display it to the best advantage. If a stick cracked, or if any one moved suddenly about him, or coughed, or hawked, or spoke a little louder than common, up went Bullet's tail like lightning; and if the *going up* did not please, the *coming down* must of necessity, for it was as different from the other movement as was its direction. The first was a bold and rapid flight upward, usually to an angle of forty-five degrees. In this position he kept his interesting appendage until he satisfied himself that nothing in particular was to be done; when he commenced dropping it by half inches, in second beats, then in triple time, then faster and shorter, and faster and shorter still, until it finally died away imperceptibly into its natural position. If I might compare sights to sounds, I should say its *settling* was more like the note of a locust than anything else in nature.

Either from native sprightliness of disposition, from uncontrollable activity, or from an unconquerable habit of removing flies by the stamping of the feet, Bullet never stood still, but always kept up a gentle fly-scaring movement of his limbs, which was peculiarly interesting.

"I tell you, man," proceeded the Yellow Blossom, "he's the best live hoss that ever trod the grit of Georgia. Bob Smart knows the hoss. Come here, Bob, and mount this hoss, and show Bullet's motions." Here Bullet bristled up, and looked as if he had been hunting for Bob all day long,

and had just found him. Bob sprang on his back. "Boo-oo-oo!" said Bob, with a fluttering noise of the lips, and away went Bullet as if in a quarter race, with all his beauties spread in handsome style.

"Now fetch him back," said Blossom. Bullet turned and came in pretty much as he went out.

"Now trot him by." Bullet reduced his tail to *customary,* sidled to the right and left airily, and exhibited at least three varieties of trot in the short space of fifty yards.

"Make him pace!" Bob commenced twitching the bridle and kicking at the same time. These inconsistent movements obviously (and most naturally) disconcerted Bullet; for it was impossible for him to learn from them whether he was to proceed or stand still. He started to trot, and was told that wouldn't do. He attempted a canter, and was checked again. He stopped, and was urged to go on. Bullet now rushed into the wide field of experiment, and struck out a gait of his own that completely turned the tables upon his rider, and certainly deserved a patent. It seemed to have derived its elements from the jig, the minuet, and the cotillion. If it was not a pace, it certainly had pace in it, and no man would venture to call it anything else; so it passed off to the satisfaction of the owner.

"Walk him!" Bullet was now at home again, and he walked as if money were staked on him.

The stranger, whose name I afterwards learned was Peter Ketch, having examined Bullet to his heart's content, ordered his son Neddy to go and bring up Kit. Neddy soon appeared upon Kit, a well-formed sorrel of the middle size, and in good order. His *tout-ensemble* threw Bullet entirely in the shade, though a glance was sufficient to satisfy any one that Bullet had the decided advantage of him in point of intellect.

"Why, man," said Blossom, "do you bring such a hoss as that to trade for Bullet? Oh, I see, you've no notion of trading!"

"Ride him off, Neddy!" said Peter. Kit put off at a handsome lope.

"Trot him back!" Kit came in at a long, sweeping trot, and stopped suddenly at the crowd.

"Well," said Blossom, "let me look at him; maybe he'll do to plough."

"Examine him," said Peter, taking hold the bridle close to the mouth; "he's nothing but a tacky. He ain't as *pretty* a horse as Bullet, I know,

but he'll do. Start 'em together for a hundred and fifty *mile,* and if Kit ain't twenty mile ahead of him at the coming out, any man may take Kit for nothing. But he's a monstrous mean horse, gentlemen; any man may see that. He's the scariest horse, too, you ever saw. He won't do to hunt on, nohow. Stranger, will you let Neddy have your rifle to shoot off him? Lay the rifle between his ears, Neddy, and shoot at the blaze in that stump. Tell me when his head is high enough."

Ned fired and hit the blaze, and Kit did not move a hair's-breadth.

"Neddy, take a couple of sticks, and beat on that hogshead at Kit's tail."

Ned made a tremendous rattling, at which Bullet took fright, broke his bridle, and dashed off in grand style, and would have stopped all further negotiations by going home in disgust, had not a traveller arrested him and brought him back; but Kit did not move.

"I tell you, gentlemen," continued Peter, "he's the scariest horse you ever saw. He ain't as gentle as Bullet, but he won't do any harm if you watch him. Shall I put him in a cart, gig, or wagon for you, stranger? He'll cut the same capers there he does here. He's a monstrous mean horse."

During all this time Blossom was examining him with the nicest scrutiny. Having examined his frame and limbs, he now looked at his eyes.

"He's got a curious look out of his eyes," said Blossom.

"Oh yes, sir," said Peter, "just as blind as a bat. Blind horses always have clear eyes. Make a motion at his eyes, if you please, sir."

Blossom did so, and Kit threw up his head rather as if something pricked him under the chin than as if fearing a blow. Blossom repeated the experiment, and Kit jerked back in considerable astonishment.

"Stone-blind, you see, gentlemen," proceeded Peter; "but he's just as good to travel of a dark night as if he had eyes."

"Blame my buttons," said Blossom, "if I like them eyes!"

"No," said Peter, "nor I neither. I'd rather have 'em made of diamonds; but they'll do—if they don't show as much white as Bullet's."

"Well," said Blossom, "make a pass at me."

"No," said Peter, "you made the banter, now make your pass."

"Well, I'm never afraid to price my hosses. You must give me twenty-five dollars boot."

"Oh, certainly; say fifty, and my saddle and bridle in. Here, Neddy, my son, take away daddy's horse."

"Well," said Blossom, "I've made my pass, now you make yours."

"I'm for short talk in a horse-swap, and therefore always tell a gentleman at once what I mean to do. You must give me ten dollars."

Blossom swore absolutely, roundly, and profanely that he never would give boot.

"Well," said Peter, "I didn't care about trading; but you cut such high shines that I thought I'd like to back you out, and I've done it. Gentlemen, you see I've brought him to a back."

"Come, old man," said Blossom, "I've been joking with you. I begin to think you do want to trade; therefore, give me five dollars and take Bullet. I'd rather lose ten dollars any time than not make a trade, though I hate to fling away a good hoss."

"Well," said Peter, "I'll be as clever as you are. Just put the five dollars on Bullet's back, and hand him over; it's a trade."

Blossom swore again, as roundly as before, that he would not give boot; and, said he, "Bullet wouldn't hold five dollars on his back, nohow. But, as I bantered you, if you say an even swap, here's at you."

"I told you," said Peter, "I'd be as clever as you; therefore, here goes two dollars more, just for trade sake. Give me three dollars, and it's a bargain."

Blossom repeated his former assertion; and here the parties stood for a long time, and the by-standers (for many were now collected) began to taunt both parties. After some time, however, it was pretty unanimously decided that the old man had backed Blossom out.

At length Blossom swore he "never should be backed out for three dollars after bantering a man"; and, accordingly, they closed the trade.

"Now," said Blossom, as he handed Peter the three dollars, "I'm a man that, when he makes a bad trade, makes the most of it until he can make a better. I'm for no rues and after-claps."

"That's just my way," said Peter; "I never goes to law to mend my bargains."

"Ah, you're the kind of boy I love to trade with. Here's your hoss, old man. Take the saddle and bridle off him, and I'll strip yours; but lift up the blanket easy from Bullet's back, for he's a mighty tender-backed hoss."

The old man removed the saddle, but the blanket stuck fast. He attempted to raise it, and Bullet bowed himself, switched his tail, danced a little, and gave signs of biting.

"Don't hurt him, old man," said Blossom, archly; "take it off easy. I am, perhaps, a leetle of the best man at a horse-swap that ever catched a coon."

Peter continued to pull at the blanket more and more roughly, and Bullet became more and more *cavortish,* insomuch that, when the blanket came off, he had reached the *kicking* point in good earnest.

The removal of the blanket disclosed a sore on Bullet's back that seemed to have defied all medical skill. It measured six full inches in length and four in breadth, and had as many features as Bullet had motions. My heart sickened at the sight; and I felt that the brute who had been riding him in that situation deserved the halter.

The prevailing feeling, however, was that of mirth. The laugh became loud and general at the old man's expense, and rustic witticisms were liberally bestowed upon him and his late purchase. These Blossom continued to provoke by various remarks. He asked the old man "if he thought Bullet would let five dollars lie on his back." He declared most seriously that he had owned that horse three months, and had never discovered before that he had a sore back, "or he never should have thought of trading him," etc., etc.

The old man bore it all with the most philosophic composure. He evinced no astonishment at his late discovery, and made no replies. But his son Neddy had not disciplined his feelings quite so well. His eyes opened wider and wider from the first to the last pull of the blanket, and when the whole sore burst upon his view, astonishment and fright seemed to contend for the mastery of his countenance. As the blanket disappeared, he stuck his hands in his breeches pockets, heaved a deep sigh, and lapsed into a profound reverie, from which he was only roused by the cuts at his father. He bore them as long as he could; and, when he could contain himself no longer, he began, with a certain wildness of expres-

sion which gave a peculiar interest to what he uttered: "His back's mighty bad off; but dod drot my sould if he's put it to daddy as bad as he thinks he has, for old Kit's both blind and *deef,* I'll be dod drot if he ein't!"

"The devil he is!" said Blossom.

"Yes, dod drot my soul if he *ein't!"* You walk him, and see if he *ein't.* His eyes don't look like it; but he's *jist as leve go agin the* house with you, or in a ditch, as anyhow. Now you go try him." The laugh was now turned on Blossom, and many rushed to test the fidelity of the little boy's report. A few experiments established its truth beyond controversy.

"Neddy," said the old man, "you oughtn't to try and make people discontented with their things. Stranger, don't mind what the little boy says. If you can only get Kit rid of them little failings you'll find him all sorts of a horse. You are a *leetle* the best man at a horse-swap that ever I got hold of but don't fool away Kit. Come, Neddy, my son, let's be moving; the stranger seems to be getting snappish."

SWALLOWING an OYSTER ALIVE

JOHN S. ROBB

From The Big Bear of Arkansas,
1845, edited by Wm. T. Porter.

SWALLOWING an OYSTER ALIVE

JOHN S. ROBB

AT A LATE hour, the other night, the door of an oyster house in our city was thrust open, and in stalked a hero from the Sucker state. He was quite six feet high, spare, somewhat stooped, with a hungry, anxious countenance, and his hands pushed clear down to the bottom of his breeches pockets. His outer covering was hard to define, but after surveying it minutely, we came to the conclusion that his suit had been made in his boyhood, of a dingy yellow linsey-wolsey, and that, having sprouted up with astonishing rapidity, he had been forced to piece it out with all colours, in order to keep pace with his body. In spite of his exertions, however, he had fallen in arrears about a foot of the necessary length, and, consequently, stuck that far through his inexpressibles. His crop of hair was surmounted by the funniest little seal-skin cap imaginable. After taking a position, he indulged in a long stare at the man opening the *bivalves,* and slowly ejaculated—"Isters?"

"Yes, sir," responded the attentive operator,—"and fine ones they are, too."

"Well, I've heard of isters afore," says he, "but this is the fust time I've seed 'm, and *pre-haps* I'll know what *thar* made of afore I git out of town.

Having expressed his desperate intention, he cautiously approached the plate and scrutinized the uncased shell-fish with a gravity and interest which would have done honour to the most illustrious searcher into the hidden mysteries of nature. At length he began to soliloquize on the difficulty of getting them out, and how queer they looked when out.

"I never seed any thin' hold on so—takes an amazin' site of screwin, hoss, to get 'em out, and aint they slick and slip'ry when they does come? Smooth as an eel! I've a good mind to give that feller lodgin', jist to realize the effects, as uncle Jess used to say about speckalation."

"Well, sir," was the reply, "down with two bits, and you can have a dozen."

"Two bits!" exclaimed the Sucker, "now come that's stickin' it on rite strong, hoss, for *isters*. A dozen on 'em aint nothin' to a chicken, and there's no gettin' more'n a picayune a piece for *them*. I've only realized forty-five picayunes on my first ventur' to St. Louis. I'll tell you what, I'll gin you two chickens for a dozen, if you'll conclude to deal."

A wag, who was standing by indulging in a dozen, winked to the attendant to shell out, and the offer was accepted.

"Now mind," repeated the Sucker, "all fair—two chickens for a dozen —you're a witness, mister," turning at the same to the wag; "none of your tricks, for I've heard that your city fellers are mity slip'ry coons."

The bargain being fairly understood, our Sucker squared himself for the onset; deliberately put off his seal-skin, tucked up his sleeves, and, fork in hand, awaited the appearance of No. 1. It came—he saw—and quickly it was bolted! A moment's dreadful pause ensued. The wag dropped his knife and fork with a look of mingled amazement and horror—something akin to Shakespeare's Hamlet on seeing his daddy's ghost —while he burst into the exclamation—

"Swallowed alive, as I'm a Christian!"

Our Sucker hero had opened his mouth with pleasure a moment before, now it *stood* open. Fear—a horrid dread of he didn't know what—a consciousness that all wasn't right, and ignorant of the extent of the wrong —the uncertainty of the moment was terrible. Urged to desperation, he faltered out—

"What on earth's the row?"

"Did you swallow it alive?" inquired the wag.

"I swallowed it jest as he gin it to me!" shouted the Sucker.

"You're a dead man!" exclaimed his anxious friend, "the creature is alive, and will eat right through you," added he, in a most hopeless tone.

"Get a pizen pump and pump it out!" screamed the Sucker, in a frenzy, his eyes fairly starting from their sockets. "O gracious!—what'll I do?—It's got holds of my innards already, and I'm dead as a chicken!—do somethin' for me, do—don't let the infernal sea-toad eat me afore your eyes."

"Why don't you put some of this on it?" inquired the wag, pointing to the bottle of strong pepper-sauce.

The hint was enough—the Sucker, upon the instant, seized the bottle, and desperately wrenching out the cork, swallowed half the contents at a draught. He fairly squealed from its effects, and gasped and blowed, and pitched, and twisted, as if it were coursing through him with electric effect, while at the same time his eyes ran a stream of tears. At length becoming a little composed, his waggish adviser approached, almost bursting with suppressed laughter, and inquired,—

"How are you now old fellow—did you kill it?"

"Well, I did, hoss'—ugh, ugh o-o-o my inards. If that *ister* critter's dyin' agonies didn't stir a 'ruption in me equal to a small arthquake, then 'taint no use sayin' it—it squirmed like a sarpent, when that killin' stuff touched it; hu' "—and here with a countenance made up of suppressed agony and present determination, he paused to give force to his words, and slowly and deliberately remarked, "If you git two chickens from me for that live animal, I'm d—d!" and seizing his seal-skin he vanished.

The shout of laughter, and the contortions of the company at this finale, would have made a spectator believe that they had all been *swallowing oysters alive.*

SUT LOVINGOOD'S Daddy, ACTING HORSE

GEORGE W. HARRIS

This story appeared originally in the Spirit of the Times, *N. Y., 1854 November 4 and was the first* Sut Lovingood *yarn written.*

SUT LOVINGOOD'S Daddy, ACTING HORSE

GEORGE W. HARRIS

HOLE THAT ar hoss down tu the yeath." "He's a fixin fur the heavings." "He's a spreadin his tail feathers tu fly. Look out, Laigs, if you aint ready tu go up'ards." "Wo, Shavetail." "Git a fiddil; he's tryin a jig." "Say, Long Laigs, rais'd a power ove co'n, didn't yu?" "Taint co'n, hits red pepper."

These and like expressions were addressed to a queer looking, long legged, short bodied, small headed, white haired, hog eyed, funny sort of a genius, fresh from some bench-legged Jew's clothing store, mounted on "Tearpoke," a nick tailed, bow necked, long, poor, pale sorrel horse, half dandy, half devil, and enveloped in a perfect net-work of bridle, reins, crupper, martingales, straps, surcingles, and red ferreting, who reined up in a front of Pat Nash's grocery, among a crowd of mountaineers full of fun, foolery, and mean whiskey.

This was Sut Lovingood.

"I say, you durn'd ash cats, jis' keep yer shuts on, will ye? You never seed a rale hoss till I rid up; you's p'raps stole ur owned shod rabbits ur sheep wif borrerd saddils on, but when you tuck the fus' begrudgin look jis' now at this critter, name Tarpoke, yu wer enjoyin a sight ove nex' tu

the bes' hoss what ever shell'd nubbins ur toted jugs, an' he's es ded es a still wum, poor ole Tickeytail!

"Wo! wo! Tarpoke, yu cussed infunel fidgety hide full ove hell fire, can't yu stan' still an listen while I'se a polishin yer karacter off es a mortul hoss tu these yere durned fools?"

Sut's tongue or his spurs brought Tearpoke into something like passable quietude while he continued:

"Say yu, sum ove yu growin hogs made a re-mark jis' now 'bout red-pepper. I jis' wish tu say in a gineral way that eny wurds cupplin red-pepper an Tarpoke tugether am durn'd infurnal lies."

"What killed Tickeytail, Sut?" asked an anxious inquirer after truth.

"Why nuffin, you cussed fool; he jis' died so, standin up et that. Warn't that rale caste hoss pluck? Yu see, he froze stiff; no, not that adzactly, but starv'd fust, an' froze arterards, so stiff that when dad an' me went tu lay him out an' we push'd him over, he stuck out jis' so, (spreading his arms and legs), like ontu a carpenter's bainch, an' we hed tu wait ni ontu seventeen days fur 'im tu thaw afore we cud skin 'im."

"Skin 'im?" interrupted a rat-faced youth, whittling on a corn stalk, "I thot yu wanted tu lay the hoss out."

"The hell yu did! Aint skinin the natral way ove layin out a hoss, I'd like tu no? See a yere, soney, yu tell yer mam tu hev yu sot back jis' bout two years, fur et the rate yu'se a climbin yu stan's a pow'ful chance tu die wif yer shoes on, an' git laid hoss way, yu dus."

The rat-faced youth shut up his knife and subsided.

"Well, thar we wer—dad, an' me (counting on his fingers), an' Sall, an' Jake (fool Jake we calls 'im fur short), an' Jim, an' Phineass, an' Callimy Jane, an' Sharlottyann, an' me, an' Zodiack, an' Cashus Clay, an' Noah Dan Webster, an' the twin gals (Castur and Pollox), an' me, an' Catherin Second, an' Cleopatry Antony, an' Jane Barnum Lind, an' me, an' Benton Bullion, an' the baby what haint nam'd yet, an' me, an' the Prospect, an' mam hersef, all lef in the woods alone, wifout ara hoss ty crup wif."

"Yu'se counted yersef five times, Mister Lovingood," said a tomato-nosed man in ragged overcoat.

"Yas, ole Still-tub, that's jis the perporshun I bears in the famerly fur

dam fool, leavin out Dad in course. Yu jis let me alone, an' be a thinkin ove gittin more hoops ontu yu. Yus leakin now; see that." Ha! ha! from the crowd, and "Still-tub" went into the doggery.

"Warn't that a devil's own mess ove broth fur a 'spectabil white famerly tu be sloshin about in? I be durned ef I didn't feel sorter like stealin a hoss sumtimes, an' I speck I'd a dun hit, but the stealin streak in the Lovingoods, all run tu durned fool, an' the onvartus streak all run tu laigs. Jis look down the side ove this yere hoss mos' tu the groun'. Dus yu see em?

"Well we waited, an' wished, an' rested, an' plan'd, an' wished, an' waited agin, ontil ni ontu strawberry time, hopin sum stray hoss mout cum along; but dorg my cats, ef eny sich good luck ever cums wifin reach ove whar dad is, he's so dod-dratted mean, an' lazy, an' ugly, an' savidge, an' durn fool tu kill.

"Well, one nite he lay awake till cock-crowin a snortin, an' rollin, an' blowin, an' shufflin, an' scratchin hissef, an' a whisperin at mam a heap, an' at breckfus, I foun' out what hit ment. Says he, 'Sut, I'll tell yu what we'll du: I'll be hoss *mysef*, an' pull the plow whilst yu drives me, an' then the "Ole Quilt" (he ment that fur mam) an' the brats kin plant, an' tend, ur jis let hit alone, es they darn pleze; I aint a carein.'

"So out we went tu the pawpaw thicket, an' peel'd a rite smart chance ove bark, an' mam an' me made geers fur dad, while he sot on the fence a-lookin at us, an' a-studyin pow'rful. I arterards foun' out, he wer a-studyin how tu play the kar-acter ove a hoss puffectly.

"Well, the geers becum him mitily, an' nuffin wud du 'im but he mus hev a bridil, so I gits a umereller brace—hit's a litil forked piece ove squar wire bout a foot long, like a yung pitch-fork, yu no—an' twisted hit sorter intu a bridil bit snaffil shape. Dad wanted hit made kurb, es he hedn't work'd fur a good while, an' said he mout sorter feel his keepin, an' go tu ravin an' cavortin.

"When we got the bridil fix'd ontu dad, don't yu bleve he sot in tu chompin hit jis like a rale hoss, an' tried tu bite me on the arm (he allers wer a mos' complikated durned ole fool, an' mam sed so when he warnt about). I put on the geers, an' while mam wer a-tyin the belly ban', a-strainin hit pow'rful tite, he drapt ontu his hans, sed 'Whay-a-a' like a

mad hoss wud, an' slung his hine laigs at mam's hed. She step'd back a littil an' wer standin wif her arms cross'd a-restin em on her stomick, an' his heel taps cum wifin a inch ove her nose. Sez she, 'Yu plays hoss better nur yu dus husban.' He jis' run backards on all fours, an' kick'd at her agin, an'—an' pawd the groun wif his fis.

" 'Lead him off tu the field, Sut, afore he kicks ur bites sumbody,' sez mam. I shoulder'd the gopher plow, an' tuck hole ove the bridil. Dad leaned back sulky, till I sed cluck cluck wif my tongue, then he started. When we cum tu the fence I let down the gap, an' hit made dad mad; he wanted tu jump hit on all fours hoss way. Oh' geminy! what a durn'd ole fool kin cum tu ef he gins up tu the complaint.

"I hitch'd 'im tu the gopher, a-watchin him pow'ful clost, fur I'd see how quick he cud drap ontu his hands, an' kick, an' away we went, dad leanin forard tu his pullin, an' we made rite peart plowin' fur tu hev a green hoss, an' bark gears; he went over the sprowts an' bushes same as a rale hoss, only he traveled on two laigs. I wer mitily hope up bout co'n; I cud a'mos see hit a cumin up; but thar's a heap ove whisky spilt twixt the counter an' the mouf, ef hit ain't got but two foot tu travil. 'Bout the time wer beginin tu break sweat, we cum tu a sassafrack bush, an tu keep up his karacter es a hoss, he buljed squar intu an' thru hit, tarin down a ball ho'nets nes' ni ontu es big es a hoss's hed, an' the hole tribe kiver'd 'im es quick es yu cud kiver a sick pup wif a saddil blanket. He lit ontu his hands agin, and kick'd strait up onst, then he rar'd, an' fotch a squeal wus nur ara stud hoss in the State, an' sot in tu strait runnin away jis es natral es yu ever seed any uther skeer'd hoss du. I let go the line an' holler'd Wo! dad, wo! but yu mout jis' es well say Woa! tu a locomotum, ur Suke cow tu a gal.

"Gewhillitins! how he run: when he cum tu bushes, he'd clar the top ove em wif a squeal, gopher an' all. P'raps he tho't thar mout be anuther settilment ove ball ho'nets thar, an' hit wer safer tu go over than thru, an' quicker dun eny how. Every now an' then he'd fan the side ove his hed, fust wif wun fore laig an' then tuther, then he'd gin hissef a round-handed slap what soundid like a waggin whip ontu the place whar the breechbands tetches a hoss, a-runnin all the time an' a-kerrin that ar gopher jis 'bout as fas' an' es hi frum the yeath es ever any gopher wer

kerried I'll swar. When he cum tu the fence, he jis tore thru hit, bustin an' scatterin ni ontu seven panils wif lots ove broken rails. Rite yere he lef the gopher, geers, close, clevis, an' swingletress, all mix'd up, an' not wuf a durn. Mos' ove his shut staid ontu the aind ove a rail, an' ni ontu a pint ove ho'nets thar a stingin all over; hits smell fool'd em. The balance on em, ni ontu a gallun, kep' on wif dad. He seem'd tu run jis adzactly es fas' es a ho'net cud fly; hit wer the titest race I ever seed, fur wun hoss tu git all the whipin. Down thru a saige field they all went, the ho'nets makin hit look like thar wer smoke roun' dad's bald hed, an' he wif nuffin on the green yeath in the way ove close about im, but the bridil, an' ni ontu a yard ove plow line sailin behine, wif a tir'd out ho'net ridin on the pint ove hit. I seed that he wer aimin fur the swimin hole in the krick, whar the bluff am over twenty-five foot pupendiculer tu the water, an' hits ni ontu ten foot deep.

"Well, tu keep up his karacter es a hoss, plum thru, when he got tu the bluff he loped off, ur rather jis' kep on a runnin. Kerslunge intu the krick he went. I seed the warter fly plum abuv the bluff from whar I wer.

"Now rite thar, boys, he over-did the thing, ef actin hoss tu the scribe wer what he wer arter; fur thars nara hoss ever foaldid durned fool enuf tu lope over eny sich place; a cussed muel mout a dun hit, but dad warn't actin muel, tho' he orter tuck that karacter; hits adzactly sooted tu his dispersition, all but not breedin. I crept up tu the aidge, an' peep'd over. Thar wer dad's bald hed fur all the yeath like a peeled inyin, a bobbin up an' down an' aroun, an' the ho'nets sailin roun tuckey buzzard fashun, an' every onst in a while one, an' sum times ten, wud take a dip at dad's bald head. He kep' up a rite peart dodgin onder, sumtimes afore they hit im, an' sumtimes arterard, an' the warter wer kivered wif drowned ball ho'nets. Tu look at hit frum the top ove the bluff, hit wer pow'ful inturestin, an' sorter funny; I wer on the bluff myse'f, mine yu.

"Dad cudent see the funny part frum whar he wer, but hit seem'd tu be inturestin tu him frum the 'tenshum he wer payin tu the bisness ove divin an' cussin.

"Sez I, 'Dad, ef yu's dun washin yersef, an hes drunk enuff, less go back tu our plowin, hit will soon be powful hot.' 'Hot—hell!' sez dad; 'hit am hot rite now. Don't (an onder went his hed) yer see (dip) these

cussed (dip) infun—(dip) varmints arter me?' (dip.) 'What,' sez I, 'them ar hoss flies thar, that's nat'ral, dad; you aint raley fear'd ove them, is yu?' 'Hoss flies! h—l an' (dip) durnation!' sez dad, 'theyse rale ginui—(dip) ball ho'nets, (dip) yu infunel ignurant cuss!' (dip.) 'Kick em—bite em—paw em—switch em wif yure tail, dad,' sez I. 'Oh! soney, soney, (dip) how I'll sweeten yure (dip) when these (dip) ho'nets leave yere.' 'Yu'd better du the levin yursef, dad,' sez I. 'Leave yere! Sturn yu d—n fool! How (dip) kin I, (dip) when they won't (dip) let me stay (dip) atop (dip) the warter even.' 'Well, dad, yu'l hev tu stay thar till nite, an' arter they goes tu roos' yu cum home. I'll hev yer feed in the troft redy; yu won't need eny curyin tu-nite, will yu?' 'I wish (dip) I may never (dip) see to-morrer, ef I (dip) don't make (dip) hame strings (dip) outer yure hide (dip) when I dus (dip) git outen yere,' sez dad. 'Better say yu wish yu may never see anuther ball ho'net, ef yu ever play hoss agin,' sez I.

"Them words toch dad tu the hart, an' I felt they mus' be my las, knowin dad's onmollified nater. I broke frum them parts, an' sorter cum over yere tu the copper mines. When I got tu the hous', 'Whar's yer dad?' sez mam. 'Oh, he turn'd durn fool, an' run away, busted every thing all tu cussed smash, an's in the swimmin hole a divin arter minners. Look out, mam, he'll cum home wif a angel's temper; better sen' fur sum strong man body tu keep him frum huggin yu tu deth. 'Law sakes!' sez mam; 'I know'd he cudent act hoss fur ten minutes wifout actin infunel fool, tu save his life.'

"I staid hid out ontil nex' arternoon, an' I seed a feller a-travelin. Sez I, 'How de do, mister? What wer agwine on at the cabin, this side the crick, when yu pass'd thar?' 'Oh, nuthin much, only a pow'ful fat man wer a lyin in the yard ontu his belly, wif no shut on, an' a 'oman wer a greasin ove his shoulders an' arms outen a gourd. A pow'ful curious, vishus, skeery lookin cuss he is tu b'shure. His head am as big es a wash pot, an' he hasent the fust durned sign ove an eye—jist two black slits. Is thar much small pox roun yere?' 'Small hell!' sez I, 'no sir.' 'Been much fightin in this neighborhood lately?' 'Nun wuf speakin ove,' sez I. He scratched his head—'Nur French measils?' 'Not jist clost,' sez I. 'Well, do yu know what ails that man back thar?' 'Jist gittin over a vilent attack

ove dam fool,' sez I. 'Well, who is he eny how?' I ris tu my feet, an' straitched out my arm, an' sez I, 'Strainger, that man is my dad.' He looked at my laigs an' pussonel feeters a moment, an' sez he, 'Yas, dam ef he aint.'

"Now boys, I haint seed dad since, an' I dusent hev much appertite tu see im fur sum time tu cum. Less all drink! Yere's luck tu the durned old fool, an' the ho'nets too.

SIMON SUGGS
Attends
A CAMP-MEETING

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

From Simon Suggs, *Ch. 10.*

SIMON SUGGS
Attends
A CAMP-MEETING

JOHNSON J. HOOPER

CAPTAIN SUGGS found himself as poor at the conclusion of the Creek war, as he had been at its commencement. Although no "arbitrary," "despotic," "corrupt," and "unprincipled" judge had fined him a thousand dollars for his proclamation of martial law at Fort Suggs, or the enforcement of its rules in the case of Mrs. Haycock; yet somehow—the thing is alike inexplicable to him and to us—the money which he had contrived, by various shifts, to obtain, melted away and was gone forever. To a man like the Captain, of intense domestic affections, this state of destitution was most distressing. "He could stand it himself—didn't care a d—n for it, no way," he observed, "but the old woman and the children; *that* bothered him!"

As he sat one day, ruminating upon the unpleasant condition of his "financial concerns," Mrs. Suggs informed him that "the sugar and coffee was nigh about out," and that there were not "a dozen j'ints and middlins, *all put together,* in the smoke-house." Suggs bounced up on the instant, exclaiming, "D—n it! *somebody* must suffer!" But whether this remark was intended to convey the idea that he and his family were about to experience the want of the necessaries of life; or that some other, and

as yet unknown, individual should "suffer" to prevent that prospective exigency, must be left to the commentators, if perchance any of that ingenious class of persons should hereafter see proper to write notes for this history. It is enough for us that we give all the facts in this connection, so that ignorance of the subsequent conduct of Captain Suggs may not lead to an erroneous judgment in respect to his words.

Having uttered the exclamation we have repeated—and perhaps, hurriedly walked once or twice across the room—Captain Suggs drew on his famous old green-blanket overcoat, and ordered his horse, and within five minutes was on his way to a camp-meeting, then in full blast on Sandy Creek, twenty miles distant, where he hoped to find amusement, at least. When he arrived there, he found the hollow square of the encampment filled with people, listening to the mid-day sermon, and its dozen accompanying "exhortations." A half-dozen preachers were dispensing the word; the one in the pulpit, a meek-faced old man, of great simplicity and benevolence. His voice was weak and cracked, notwithstanding which, however, he contrived to make himself heard occasionally, above the din of the exhorting, the singing, and the shouting which were going on around him. The rest were walking to and fro, (engaged in the other exercises we have indicated), among the "mourners"—a host of whom occupied the seat set apart for their especial use—or made personal appeals to the mere spectators. The excitement was intense. Men and women rolled about on the ground, or lay sobbing or shouting in promiscuous heaps. More than all, the negroes sang and screamed and prayed. Several, under the influence of what is technically called "the jerks," were plunging and pitching about with convulsive energy. The great object of all seemed to be, to see who could make the greatest noise—

> "And each—for madness ruled the hour—
> Would try his own expressive power."

"Bless my poor old soul!" screamed the preacher in the pulpit; "ef yonder aint a squad in that corner that we aint got one outen yet! It'll never do"—raising his voice—"you must come outen that! Brother Fant, fetch up that youngster in the blue coat! I see the Lord's a-workin' upon him! Fetch him along—glory—yes!—hold to him!"

"Keep the thing warm!" roared a sensual seeming man, of stout mould and florid countenance, who was exhorting among a bevy of young women, upon whom he was lavishing caresses. "Keep the thing warm, breethring!—come to the Lord, honey!" he added, as he vigorously hugged one of the damsels he sought to save.

"Oh, I've got him!" said another in exulting tones, as he led up a gawky youth among the mourners—"I've got him—he tried to git off, but—ha! Lord!"—shaking his head as much as to say, it took a smart fellow to escape him—"ha! Lord!"—and he wiped the perspiration from his face with one hand, and with the other, patted his neophyte on the shoulder—"he couldn't do it! No! Then he tried to argy wi' me—but bless the Lord! —he couldn't do that nother! Ha! Lord! I tuk him, fust in the Old Testament—bless the Lord!—and I argyed him all thro' Kings—then I throwed him into Proverbs,—and from that, here we had it up and down, kleer down to the New Testament, and then I begun to see it work him!—then we got into Matthy, and from Matthy right straight along to Acts; and *thar* I throwed him! Y-e-s—L-o-r-d!"—assuming the nasal twang and high pitch which are, in some parts, considered the perfection of rhetorical art —"Y-e-s L-o-r-d! and h-e-r-e he is! Now g-i-t down thar," addressing the subject, "and s-e-e ef the L-o-r-d won't do somethin' f-o-r you!" Having thus deposited his charge among the mourners, he started out, summarily to convert another soul!

"Gl-o-*ree!*" yelled a huge, greasy negro woman, as in a fit of the jerks, she threw herself convulsively from her feet, and fell "like a thousand of brick," across a diminutive old man in a little round hat, who was speaking consolation to one of the mourners.

"Good Lord, have mercy!" ejaculated the little man earnestly and unaffectedly, as he strove to crawl from under the sable mass which was crushing him.

In another part of the square a dozen old women were singing. They were in a state of absolute ecstasy, as their shrill pipes gave forth.

"I rode on the sky,
Quite ondestified I,
And the moon it was under my feet!"

Near these last, stood a delicate woman in that hysterical condition in which the nerves are incontrollable, and which is vulgarly—and almost blasphemously—termed the "holy laugh." A hideous grin distorted her mouth, and was accompanied with a maniac's chuckle; while every muscle and nerve of her face twitched and jerked in horrible spasms.[1]

Amid all this confusion and excitement Suggs stood unmoved. He viewed the whole affair as a grand deception—a sort of "opposition line" running against his own, and looked on with a sort of professional jealousy. Sometimes he would mutter running comments upon what passed before him.

"Well now," said he, as he observed the full-faced brother who was "officiating" among the women, "that ere feller takes *my* eye!—thar he's been this half-hour, a-figurin amongst them galls, and's never said the fust word to nobody else. Wonder what's the reason these here preachers never hugs up the old, ugly women? Never seed one do it in my life—the sperrit never moves 'em that way! It's nater tho'; and the women, *they* never flocks round one o' the old dried-up breethring—bet two to one old splinter-legs thar,"—nodding at one of the ministers—"won't git a chance to say turkey to a good-lookin gall to-day! Well! who blames 'em? Nater will be nater, all the world over; and I judge ef I was a preacher, I should save the purtiest souls fust, myself!"

While the Captain was in the middle of this conversation with himself, he caught the attention of the preacher in the pulpit, who inferring from an indescribable something about his appearance that he was a person of some consequence, immediately determined to add him at once to the church if it could be done; and to that end began a vigorous, direct personal attack.

[1] The reader is requested to bear in mind, that the scenes described in this story are not *now* to be witnessed. Eight or ten years ago, all classes of population of the Creek country were very different from what they now are. Of course no disrespect is intended to any denomination of Christians. We believe that camp-meetings are not peculiar to any church, though most usual in the Methodist—a denomination whose respectability in Alabama is attested by the fact, that *very many* of its worthy clergymen and lay members, hold honourable and profitable offices in the gift of the state legislature; of which, indeed, almost a controlling portion are themselves Methodists.

"Breethring," he exclaimed, "I see yonder a man that's a sinner; I *know* he's a sinner! Thar he stands," pointing at Simon, "a missubble old crittur, with his head a-blossomin for the grave! A few more short years, and d-o-w-n he'll go to perdition, lessen the Lord have mer-cy on him! Come up here, you old hoary-headed sinner, a-n-d git down upon your knees, a-n-d put up your cry for the Lord to snatch you from the bottomless pit! You're ripe for the devil—you're b-o-u-n-d for hell, and the Lord only knows what'll become on you!"

"D—n it," thought Suggs, "ef I only had you down in the krick swamp for a minit or so, *I'd* show you who's *old! I'd* alter your tune *mighty* sudden, you sassy, 'saitful old rascal!" But he judiciously held his tongue and gave no utterance to the thought.

The attention of many having been directed to the Captain by the preacher's remarks, he was soon surrounded by numerous well-meaning, and doubtless very pious persons, each one of whom seemed bent on the application of his own particular recipe for the salvation of souls. For a long time the Captain stood silent, or answered the incessant stream of exhortations only with a sneer; but at length, his countenance began to give token of inward emotion. First his eye-lids twitched—then his upper lip quivered—next a transparent drop formed on one of his eye-lashes, and a similar one on the tip of his nose—and, at last, a sudden bursting of air from nose and mouth, told that Captain Suggs was overpowered by his emotions. At the moment of the explosion, he made a feint as if to rush from the crowd, but he was in experienced hands, who well knew that the battle was more than half won.

"Hold to him!" said one—"it's a-workin in him as strong as a Dick horse!"

"Pour it into him," said another, "it'll all come right directly!"

"That's the way I love to see 'em do," observed a third; "when you begin to draw the water from their eyes, taint gwine to be long afore you'll have 'em on their knees!"

And so they clung to the Captain manfully, and half dragged, half led him to the mourner's bench; by which he threw himself down, altogether unmanned, and bathed in tears. Great was the rejoicing of the brethren, as they sang, shouted, and prayed around him—for by this time it had

come to be generally known that the "convicted" old man was Captain Simon Suggs, the very "chief of sinners" in all that region.

The Captain remained grovelling in the dust during the usual time, and gave vent to even more than the requisite number of sobs, and groans, and heart-piercing cries. At length, when the proper time had arrived, he bounced up, and with a face radiant with joy, commenced a series of vaultings and tumblings, which "laid in the shade" all previous performances of the sort at that camp-meeting. The brethren were in ecstasies at this demonstrative evidence of completion of the work; and whenever Suggs shouted "Gloree!" at the top of his lungs, every one of them shouted it back, until the woods rang with echoes.

The effervescence having partially subsided, Suggs was put upon his pins to relate his experience, which he did somewhat in this style—first brushing the tear-drops from his eyes, and giving the end of his nose a preparatory wring with his fingers, to free it of the superabundant moisture:

"Friends," he said, "it don't take long to curry a short horse, accordin' to the old sayin', and I'll give you the perticklers of the way I was 'brought to a knowledge' "—here the Captain wiped his eyes, brushed the tip of his nose and snuffled a little—"in less'n no time."

"Praise the Lord!" ejaculated a bystander.

"You see I come here full o' romancin' and devilment, and jist to make game of all the purceedins. Well, sure enough, I done so for some time, and was a-thinkin how I should play some trick—"

"Dear soul alive! *don't* he talk sweet!" cried an old lady in black silk—"Whar's John Dobbs? You Sukey!" screaming at a negro woman on the other side of the square—"ef you don't hunt up your mass John in a minute, and have him here to listen to this 'sperience, I'll tuck you up when I git home and give you a hundred and fifty lashes, madam!—see ef I don't! Blessed Lord!"—referring again to the Captain's relation—"aint it a *precious* 'scource!"

"I was jist a-thinkin' how I should play some trick to turn it all into redecule, when they began to come round me and talk. Long at fust I didn't mind it, but arter a little that brother"—pointing to the reverend gentleman who had so successfully carried the unbeliever through the Old

and New Testaments, and who Simon was convinced was the "big dog of the tanyard"—"that brother spoke a word that struck me kleen to the heart, and run all over me, like fire in dry grass—"

"I-I-I can bring 'em!" cried the preacher alluded to, in a tone of exultation—"Lord thou knows ef thy servant can't stir 'em up, nobody else needn't try—but the glory aint mine! I'm a poor worrum of the dust" he added, with ill-managed affectation.

"And so from that I felt somethin' a-pullin' me inside—"

"Grace! grace! nothin' but grace!" exclaimed one; meaning that "grace" had been operating in the Captain's gastric region.

"And then," continued Suggs, "I wanted to git off, but they hilt me, and bimeby I felt so missuble, I had to go yonder"—pointing to the mourner's seat—"and when I lay down thar it got wuss and wuss, and 'peared like somethin' was a-mashin' down on my back—"

"That was his load o' sin," said one of the brethren—"never mind, it'll tumble off presently, see ef it don't!" and he shook his head professionally and knowingly.

"And it kept a-gittin heavier and heavier, ontwell it looked like it might be a four year old steer, or a big pine log, or somethin' of that sort—"

"Glory to my soul," shouted Mrs. Dobbs, "it's the sweetest talk I *ever* hearn! You Sukey! aint you got John yit? never mind, my lady, *I'll* settle wi' you!" Sukey quailed before the finger which her mistress shook at her.

"And arter awhile," Suggs went on, " 'peared like I fell into a trance, like, and I seed—"

"Now we'll git the good on it!" cried one of the sanctified.

"And I seed the biggest, longest, rip-roarenest, blackest, scaliest—" Captain Suggs paused, wiped his brow, and ejaculated "Ah, L-o-r-d!" so as to give full time for curiosity to become impatience to know what he saw.

"Sarpent! warn't it?" asked one of the preachers.

"No, not a sarpent," replied Suggs, blowing his nose.

"Do tell us *what* it war, soul alive!—whar *is* John?" said Mrs. Dobbs.

"Allegator!" said the Captain.

"Alligator!" repeated every woman present, and screamed for very life.

Mrs. Dobb's nerves were so shaken by the announcement, that after repeating the horrible word, she screamed to Sukey, "You Sukey, I say,

you Su-u-ke-e-y! ef you let John come a-nigh this way, whar the dreadful alliga—shaw! what am I thinkin' 'bout? 'Twarn't nothin' but a vishin!"

"Well," said the Captain in continuation, "the allegator kept a-comin' and a-comin' to'ards me, with his great long jaws a-gapin' open like a ten-foot pair o' tailor's shears—"

"Oh! oh! oh! Lord! gracious above!" cried the women.

"Satan!" was the laconic ejaculation of the oldest preacher present, who thus informed the congregation that it was the devil which had attacked Suggs in the shape of an alligator.

"And then I concluded the jig was up, 'thout I could block his game some way; for I seed his idee was to snap off my head—"

The women screamed again.

"So I fixed myself jist like I was purfectly willin' for him to take my head, and rather he'd do it as not"—here the women shuddered perceptibly—"and so I hilt my head straight out"—the Captain illustrated by elongating his neck—"and when he come up and was a gwine to *shet down* on it, I jist pitched in a big rock which choked him to death, and that minit I felt the weight slide off, and I had the best feelins—sorter like you'll have from *good* sperrits—any body ever had!"

"Didn't I *tell* you so? Didn't I *tell* you so?" asked the brother who had predicted the off-tumbling of the load of sin. "Ha, Lord! fool *who!* I've been *all* along thar!—yes, *all along thar!* and I know every inch of the way jist as good as I do the road home!"—and then he turned round and round, and looked at all, to receive a silent tribute to his superior penetration.

Captain Suggs was now the "lion of the day." Nobody could pray so well, or exhort so movingly, as "brother Suggs." Nor did his natural modesty prevent the proper performance of appropriate exercises. With the reverend Bela Bugg (him to whom, under providence, he ascribed his conversion) he was a most especial favorite. They walked, sang, and prayed together for hours.

"Come, come up; thar's room for all!" cried brother Bugg, in his evening exhortation. "Come to the 'seat,' and ef you won't pray yourselves, let *me* pray for you!"

"Yes!" said Simon, by way of assisting his friend; "it's a game that all can win at! Ante up! ante up, boys—friends I mean—don't back out!"

"Thar aint a sinner here," said Bugg, "no matter ef his soul's black as a nigger, but what thar's room for him!"

"No matter what sort of a hand you've got," added Simon in the fulness of his benevolence; "take stock! Here am *I*, the wickedest and blindest of sinners—has spent my whole life in the sarvice of the devil—has now come in on *narry pair* and won a *pile!*" and the Captain's face beamed with holy pleasure.

"D-o-n-'t be afeard!" cried the preacher; "come along! the meanest won't be turned away! humble yourselves and come!"

"No!" said Simon, still indulging in his favourite style of metaphor; "the bluff game aint played here! No runnin' of a body off! Every body holds four aces, and when you bet, you win!"

And thus the Captain continued, until the services were concluded, to assist in adding to the number at the mourners' seat; and up to the hour of retiring, he exhibited such enthusiasm in the cause, that he was unanimously voted to be the most efficient addition the church had made during that meeting.

The next morning, when the preacher of the day first entered the pulpit, he announced that "brother Simon Suggs," mourning over his past iniquities, and desirous of going to work in the cause as speedily as possible, would take up a collection to found a church in his own neighbourhood, at which he hoped to make himself useful as soon as he could prepare himself for the ministry, which the preacher didn't doubt, would be in a very few weeks, as brother Suggs was "a man of mighty good judge*ment,* and of a great discorse." The funds were to be collected by "brother Suggs," and held in trust by brother Bela Bugg, who was the financial officer of the circuit, until some arrangement could be made to build a suitable house.

"Yes, breethring," said the Captain, rising to his feet; "I want to start a little 'sociation close to me, and I want you all to help. I'm mighty poor myself, as poor as any of you—don't leave, breethring"—observing that several of the well-to-do were about to go off—"don't leave; ef you aint able to afford any thing, jist give us your blessin' and it'll be all the same!"

This insinuation did the business, and the sensitive individuals reseated themselves.

"It's mighty little of this world's goods I've got," resumed Suggs, pulling off his hat and holding it before him; "but I'll bury *that* in the cause any how," and he deposited his last five-dollar bill in the hat.

There was a murmur of approbation at the Captain's liberality throughout the assembly.

Suggs now commenced collecting, and very prudently attacked first the gentlemen who had shown a disposition to escape. These, to exculpate themselves from anything like poverty, contributed handsomely.

"Look here, breethring," said the Captain, displaying the bank-notes thus received, "brother Snooks has drapt a five wi' me, and brother Snodgrass a ten! In course 'taint expected that you *that aint as well off as them,* will give *as much;* let every one give *accordin'* to ther means."

This was another chain-shot that raked as it went! "Who so low" as not to be able to contribute as much as Snooks and Snodgrass?

"Here's all the *small* money I've got about me," said a burly old fellow, ostentatiously handing to Suggs, over the heads of a half dozen, a ten dollar bill.

"That's what I call maganimus!" exclaimed the Captain; "that's the way *every* rich man ought to do!"

These examples were followed, more or less closely, by almost all present, for Simon had excited the pride of purse of the congregation, and a very handsome sum was collected in a very short time.

The reverend Mr. Bugg, as soon as he observed that our hero had obtained all that was to be had at that time, went to him and inquired what amount had been collected. The Captain replied that it was still uncounted, but that it couldn't be much under a hundred.

"Well, brother Suggs, you'd better count it and turn it over to me now. I'm goin' to leave presently."

"No!" said Suggs—"can't do it!"

"Why?—what's the matter?" inquired Bugg.

"It's got to be *prayed over,* fust!" said Simon, a heavenly smile illuminating his whole face.

"Well," replied Bugg, "les go one side and do it!"

"No!" said Simon, solemnly.

Mr. Bugg gave a look of inquiry.

"You see that krick swamp?" asked Suggs—"I'm gwine down in *thar,* and I'm gwine to lay this money down *so"*—showing how he would place it on the ground—"and I'm gwine to git on these here knees"—slapping the right one—"and I'm *n-e-v-e-r* gwine to quit the grit ontwell I feel it's got the blessin'! And nobody aint got to be thar but me!"

Mr. Bugg greatly admired the Captain's fervent piety, and bidding him God-speed, turned off.

Captain Suggs "struck for" the swamp sure enough, where his horse was already hitched. "Ef them fellers aint done to a cracklin," he muttered to himself as he mounted, "I'll never bet on two pair agin! They're peart at the snap game, theyselves; but they're badly lewed this hitch! Well! Live and let live is a good old motter, and it's my sentiments adzactly!" And giving the spur to his horse, off he cantered.

BREAKING
a
BANK

SOL SMITH

From A Quarter Race in Kentucky,
1846, edited by Wm. T. Porter.

BREAKING a BANK

SOL SMITH

CAPTAIN SUMMONS is a very clever fellow—and the "Dr. Franklin" *was* a very superb boat, albeit inclined to rock about a good deal, and nearly turn over on her side when visited by a breath of air in the least resembling a gale. Capt. Summons is a clever fellow. All steamboat captains are clever fellows—or *nearly* all; but what I mean to say is, Captain Summons is a *particularly* clever fellow!—A clever fellow in the widest sense of the term—a fellow that is clever in every way—anxious that his passengers shall be comfortably bestowed, well fed and well attended to—and *determined* that they shall amuse themselves "just as they d—n please," as the saying is. If he happens to have preachers on board, he puts on a serious countenance of a Sunday morning—consents that there shall be preaching—orders the chairs to be set out, and provides Bibles and hymn-books for the occasion—himself and officers, whose watch is below, taking front seats and listening attentively to the discourse. Likely as not, at the close of the service, he will ask the reverend gentleman who has been officiating, with his back in close proximity to a hot fire in a Franklin furnace, to accompany him to the bar and join him in some re-

freshments! if there are passengers on board who prefer to pass the time away in playing poker, ucre, brag, or whist, tables and chairs are ready for *them,* too,—poker, brag, ucre and whist be it! All sorts of passengers are accommodated on the Dr. Franklin—the rights of none are suffered to be infringed;—all are free to follow such employments as shall please themselves. A *dance* in the evening is a very common occurrence on this boat, and when cotillions are *on the carpet,* the captain is sure to be *thar.*

It sometimes happens that, at the commencement of a voyage, it is found somewhat difficult to reconcile *all* the passengers to the system of Capt. Summons, which is found on the broad principle of equal rights to all. On the occasion of my voyage in the "Doctor," in December, 1844, I found myself surrounded by a crowd of passengers who were *entire strangers* to me—a very rare occurrence to one who travels so often on the western rivers as I do. I wished my absence from New Orleans to be as brief as possible, and the "Doctor" was the fastest boat in port at the time of my leaving the Crescent City; so I resolved to secure a berth in her, and trust in luck to find a St. Louis boat at the Mouth.

I don't know how it is, or *why* it is, but by strangers I am almost always taken for a PREACHER. It was so on this voyage. There were three Methodist *circuit* riders on board; and it happened that we got acquainted, and were a good deal together—from which circumstance I was supposed to be *one of them;* which supposition was the means of bringing me into an acquaintance with the lady passengers, who, for the most part, were very pious, religiously inclined souls. We had preaching every day, and sometimes at night; and I must say, in justice to brothers Twitchel and Switchell, that their sermons were highly edifying and instructive.

In the mean time, a portion of the passengers "at the other end of the hall" continued to play sundry games with cards, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the worthy followers of Wesley, who frequently requested the captain to interfere and break up such unholy doings. The captain had but one answer—it was something like this: "Gentlemen, amuse yourselves as you like; preach and pray to your hearts' content—none shall interfere with your pious purposes; some like that sort of

thing—*I* have no objection to it. These men prefer to amuse themselves with cards; let them—they pay their passage as well as you, gentle*men*, and have as much right to *their* amuse*ments* as you have to *yours*, and they shall not be disturbed. Preach, play cards, dance cotillions—do what you like, *I* am agreeable; only understand that *all games* (preaching among the rest) *must cease at ten o'clock*." So *we* preachers got very little comfort from Captain Summons.

Up—up, up,—up he went. Christmas day arrived. All the *other* preachers had holden forth on divers occasions, and it being ascertained that it was my intention to leave the boat on her arrival at Cairo, a formal request was preferred, that *I should preach the Christmas sermon!* The LADIES (God bless them all!) were *very* urgent in their applications to me. "Oh *do*, brother Smith! we *want* to hear *you* preach! All the others have contributed their share to our spiritual comfort—you *must* oblige us—indeed you must." I endeavoured to excuse myself the best way I could, alleging the necessity of my leaving the boat in less than an hour—my baggage was not ready—I had a terrible cold, and many other good and substantial reasons were given; but all in vain—preach I must. "Well," thinks I, "if I must, I must." At this crisis, casting my eyes down towards the Social Hall, and seeing an unusual crowd assembled around a table, I asked one of the brethren what might be going on down there? The fattest of the preaching gentlemen replied—"The poor miserable sinners have filled the measure of their iniquity by opening a FARO BANK!" "Horrible!" exclaimed I, holding up my hands—and "horrible!" echoed the ladies and missionaries in full chorus. "Cannot such doings be put a stop to?" asked an elderly lady, addressing the pious travellers. "I fear not," groaned my Methodist contemporary (the fat one). "We have been trying to convince the captain that some dreadful accident will inevitably befall the boat, if such proceedings are permitted —and what do you think he answered?" "What?" we all asked, of course. "Why, he just said, that, inasmuch as he permitted *us* to preach and pray, he should let other passengers dance and play, if they chose to do so; and that if I didn't like the 'proceedings' I complained of *I might leave the boat!* Yes—he did; and, moreover, he mentioned that it was eleven o'clock, and asked me if I wouldn't 'liquor!' " This announcement

of the captain's stubbornness and impiety was met with a general groan of pity and sorrow, and we resumed the conversation respecting the unhallowed faro bank. "It is much to be regretted," remarked the elderly lady who had spoken before, "that *something* can't be done—Brother Smith," she continued, appealing directly to me, and laying her forefinger impressively upon my arm, "cannot *you* break up that bank?" "Dear Madam," I answered, "you know not the difficulty of the task you impose upon me—FARO BANKS ARE NOT SO EASILY BROKEN UP as you may imagine; however, as you all appear so anxious about it, if you'll excuse me from the sermon, I'll see what can be done." "Ah, that's a dear soul!"—"I knew he would try."—"He'll be sure to succeed!" —"Our prayers shall not be wanting!" Such were the exclamations that greeted me, as I moved off towards the faro bank. Elbowing my way into the crowd, I got near the table in front of the dealer, and was for a time completely concealed from the view of my pious friends near the door of the ladies' cabin. I found the bank was a small affair. The betters were risking trifling sums, ranging from six to twenty-five cents.

"Mr. Dealer," I remarked, "I have come to break up this bank." "The deuce you have!" replied the banker—"let's see you do it." "What amount have you in bank?" I inquired. "Eleven dollars," was his answer. "What is your limit?" asked I. "A dollar," he replied. "Very well," said I, placing a ragged Indiana dollar behind the queen—"turn on." He turned, and the king won for me. I took the two dollars up and let him make another turn, when I replaced the bet, and the queen came up in my favour; I had now four dollars, which I placed in the square, taking in the 5, 6, 7, and —and it won again! Here were seven dollars of the banker's money. I pocketed three of them, and bet four dollars behind the queen again; the Jack won, and the BANK WAS BROKEN! The crowd dispersed in all directions, laughing at the breaking up of the petty bank, and I made my way towards the ladies' cabin, where my new friends were anxiously awaiting the result of my bold attempt. "Well, well, well," they all exclaimed—"What success?—have you done it? Do let us hear all about it!" I wiped the perspiration from my brow, and putting on a very serious face, I said solemnly: "I HAVE BROKEN THAT BANK!" "You have?" they all exclaimed.—"Yes, I'll be d—d if he hasn't," muttered the

disappointed gamester, the keeper of the late bank, who was just going into his state-room. In the midst of the congratulations which were showered upon me, I received a *summons* from the captain to come forward with my baggage—we were at Cairo.

THE DANDY
Frightening
THE SQUATTER

S. L. C.

Mark Twain's earliest known printed story, an original contribution to an American periodical in 1852, when Mark aged seventeen was setting type in the newspaper print-shop in Hannibal. The story was signed as indicated with the initials "S. L. C." The juxtaposition of Hannibal and "S. L. C.," Mark's working in the newspaper office there at that time, the setting of the sketch in Hannibal, the genre *of the story, the manner of telling, the popularity of that periodical in the river towns,—all these things point pretty clearly to Mark Twain's authorship. In this view the writer is sustained by Mr. Bernard De Voto, Mr. Walter Blair of the University of Chicago, and others. For Mr. De Voto's critical comment the reader is referred to the introduction .*

THE DANDY
Frightening
THE SQUATTER

S. L. C.

About thirteen years ago, when the now flourishing young city of Hannibal, on the Mississippi River, was but a "wood-yard," surrounded by a few huts, belonging to some hardy *"squatters,"* and such a thing as a steamboat was considered quite a sight, the following incident occurred:

A tall, brawny woodsman stood leaning against a tree which stood upon the bank of the river, gazing at some approaching object, which our readers would easily have discovered to be a steamboat.

About half an hour elapsed, and the boat was moored, and the hands busily engaged in taking on wood.

Now among the many passengers on this boat, both male and female, was a spruce young dandy, with a killing moustache, &c., who seemed bent on making an impression upon the hearts of the young ladies on board, and to do this, he thought he must perform some heroic deed. Observing our squatter friend, he imagined this to be a fine opportunity to bring himself into notice; so, stepping into the cabin, he said:

"Ladies, if you wish to enjoy a good laugh, step out on the guards. I intend to frighten that gentleman into fits who stands on the bank."

The ladies complied with the request, and our dandy drew from his bosom a formidable looking bowie-knife, and thrust it into his belt; then, taking a large horse-pistol in each hand, he seemed satisfied that all was right. Thus equipped, he strode on shore, with an air which seemed to say—"The hopes of a nation depend on me." Marching up to the woodsman, he exclaimed:

"Found you at last, have I? You are the very man I've been looking for these three weeks! Say your prayers!" he continued, presenting his pistols, "you'll make a capital barn door, and I shall drill the key-hole myself!"

The squatter calmly surveyed him a moment, and then, drawing back a step, he planted his huge fist directly between the eyes of his astonished antagonist, who, in a moment, was floundering in the turbid waters of the Mississippi.

Every passenger on the boat had by this time collected on the guards, and the shout that now went up from the crowd speedily restored the crestfallen hero to his senses, and, as he was sneaking off towards the boat, was thus accosted by his conqueror:

"I say, yeou, next time yeou come around drillin' key-holes, don't forget yer old acquaintances!"

The ladies unanimously voted the knife and pistols to the victor.

APPENDIX A

"HIGH SPOTS" OF EARLY SOUTHERN AND SOUTHWESTERN HUMOR

BALDWIN, JOSEPH G.

Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi, New York, 1853.

BRANNAN, WILLIAM P.

Harp of a Thousand Strings, New York, Haney, 1865 (?). The two burlesque sermons by Brannan included in this collection were taken from S. P. Avery's anthology, *"Harp of a Thousand Strings,"* published by Dick and Fitzgerald, New York, copyr. 1858.

BURKE, T. A. (editor)

Polly Peablossom's Wedding, edited by T. A. Burke, Phila., copyr. 1851.

CORCORAN, D.

Pickings from the Portfolio of the Reporter of the New Orleans Pickayune, Phila., 1847.

CROCKETT, DAVID

Narrative of the Life of David Crockett, Phila., 1834.

FIELD, JOSEPH M.

The Drama in Pokerville, Phila., 1847.

HARRIS, GEORGE W.

Sut Lovingood, New York, copyr. 1867. (Earlier edition?)

HOOPER, JOHNSON J.

Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs, Phila., 1845.

A Ride With Old Kit Kuncker, Tuscaloosa, 1849; later reprinted in Phila. under the title, *Widow Rugby's Husband,* 1851.

LONGSTREET, AUGUSTUS B.

Georgia Scenes, Augusta, 1835; reprinted by Harper and Brothers, New York, 1840 and subsequently as "Second Edition."

"MADISON TENSAS, M.D."

Odd Leaves from The Life of a Louisiana "Swamp Doctor," Phila., 1850(?). Later reprinted by Peterson's as *The Swamp Doctor's Adventures in the Southwest.*

PORTER, WILLIAM T. (editor)

The Big Bear of Arkansas, Phila., 1845. Edited by Wm. T. Porter.

A Quarter Race in Kentucky, Phila., 1846. Edited by Wm. T. Porter.

ROBB, JOHN S.

Streaks of Squatter Life and Far Western Scenes, Phila., 1847. Later reprinted as *Western Scenes; or Life on the Prairie.*

SMITH, SOL

Theatrical Apprenticeship, Phila., 1845.

Theatrical Journey Work, Phila., 1854.

THOMPSON, WILLIAM T.

Major Jones's Courtship, Phila., 1844. Revised and enlarged edition with thirteen additional humorous sketches, New York, 1872.

Chronicles of Pineville, Phila., 1845.

Major Jones's Sketches of Travel, Phila., 1847.

THORPE, THOMAS B.

The Mysteries of the Backwoods, Phila., 1846.

The Hive of the Bee-Hunter, New York, 1854.

APPENDIX B

BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

BALDWIN, JOSEPH G. (1815–1864)

A Virginian by birth, moved to Alabama as a young lawyer. Baldwin's name appears in 1845 in the first roll of the Alabama state bar. Represented Sumter in the state leigslature, prominent in political debates, and candidate for Congress. Moved to California in the fifties where he became Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court. Wrote also "Party Leaders" dealing with Jefferson, Hamilton, Adams and Clay.

BRADBURY, GEORGE W. (?–1847) ("Brad."; "Ex-French Editor")

Journalist. Early forties connected with New Orleans *Picayune, Tropic,* later in Cincinnati, *American Citizen,* and finally editor of the Cincinnati *News* when he died in 1847.

BRANNAN, WILLIAM P. (1825–1866) (Vandyke Browne)

Portrait painter and frequent contributor to newspapers and periodicals. Settled in Cincinnati in 1840. Burlesque sermons appeared 1855 and after. "Vagaries of Vandyke Browne," a book of verse, was published in Cincinnati in 1865.

CLEMENS, SAMUEL L. (1835–1910) ("Mark Twain")

Born of Southern parents on the Southwestern frontier,—Florida, Missouri. Printer's apprentice, Mississippi pilot, Nevada pioneer, journalist, traveller.

CROCKETT, DAVID (1786–1836)

Famous Tennessee frontiersman and soldier; rough-and-ready comic character of the backwoods and cane-brakes. Big bear-hunter, politician, soldier, sharp-shooter, traveller, Member of Congress for three terms from Tennessee. A prodigiously popular political figure, he related humorous anecdotes and tall tales with telling effect.

FIELD, JOSEPH M. (1810–1856) ("Straws," "Everpoint")

Actor, newspaper reporter, actor-manager, Associate Editor of the St. Louis *Reveille,* contributor to the New Orleans *Picayune,* New York *Spirit of the Times, Reveille,* etc. "Joe is full of fun and frolic, and ready to 'go at anything in the ring—from pitch-and-toss to manslaughter.' When he became an editor by profession, the state sustained a material loss. He was one of the best actors in the world." (Wm. T. Porter, 1845) Kate Field was his daughter.

HARRIS, GEORGE W. (1814–1869) ("Sugartail," "Sut Lovingood")

Knoxville, East Tennessee. Spent most of his life in and about the "Nobs of Old Knox," and on the French Broad and Tennessee Rivers. Jeweller's apprentice, river-boat captain, silversmith, political writer, expert worker in all metals, mountaineer, hunter, inventor, frequent contributor to periodical and newspaper press.

HOOPER, JOHNSON N. (1815–1863) ("Simon Suggs," "A Country Editor," "Number Eight.")

Born in North Carolina, moved to Alabama when young and studied law. Editor of the *East Alabamian* (Lafayette) 1843–45; Wetumka *Whig,* 1846; Montgomery *Journal,* Chambers *Tribune,* then Montgomery *Mail.* Opened law office in Lafayette in 1845, was Solicitor for the Ninth Circuit, 1849–53, Secretary Provisional Confederate Congress. "Mr. Hooper was a most genial and entertaining person, and the central figure of a brilliant coterie of writers and speakers. Of these S. S. Prentiss and George D. Prentice were the most conspicuous; and they always regarded him and spoke of him as their peer." (Watterson) A great sportsman and hunter: wrote "Dog and Gun" (1856).

JONES, HAMILTON C. (1798–?)

Born in Virginia and graduated from University of North Carolina 1818. Prominent lawyer and was elected State solicitor for the Rowan judicial district twice (1840–48). Member of the state legislature from

Rowan four times. Known as "The Author of Cousin Sally Dilliard."

LONGSTREET, AUGUSTUS B. (1790–1870) ("Hall," "Baldwin," "A Native Georgian.")

Lawyer, legislator, judge, editor, Methodist minister, politician, lecturer, and president of at least four colleges.

"MADISON TENSAS, M.D."

The identity of this writer is not known. The pseudonym, compounded of two names of adjoining parishes in Louisiana where the writer lived, has been attributed erroneously to John S. Robb and "H. C. L." "Tensas" was a frequent contributor to the New York *Spirit of the Times.* The following autobiographical note is taken from his writings, "I was scarcely sixteen, yet I was a student of medicine, and had been, almost a printer, a cotton-picker, plough-boy, gin-driver, gentleman of leisure, cabin-boy, cook, scullion, and runaway. . . ."

NOLAND, C. F. M. ("N. of Arkansas"; "Col. Pete Whetstone")

"Col. N. is a son of the old Dominion, was educated at West Point, was an officer in the U. S. Dragoons, and since his resignation has been a resident of Arkansas, where his time is about equally divided between courts of law, land offices, and the legislature." (Wm. T. Porter, 1845).

PORTER, WILLIAM T. (1809–1858) ("York's Tall Son")

Although not himself a humorist he edited the leading humorous weekly, the New York *Spirit of the Times* from 1831 to 1858. Born in Vermont but extensively known and admired throughout the South and Southwest. Great sportsman and intimately associated with all American sports writers of that period. Started as a printer, taught school and then became editor.

ROBB, JOHN S. (?—?) ("Solitaire")

Jour. Printer on the St. Louis *Reveille,* frequent contributor to the

New York *Spirit of the Times* and the *Reveille*. Later editor of the Stockton (Calif.) *Journal* (1851) where he was one of the press "gang."

SMITH, SOL (1801–1869)

" 'Old Sol' as he is familiarly termed has been in the course of his eventful life: everything by turns' but unlike many a 'Jack of all trades' he is really good at anything. As editor, actor-manager, preacher, or lawyer he has not only commanded success but deserved it. For many years he has been associated with Mr. Ludlow in the management of the Mobile, New Orleans, and St. Louis theatres. Within a few weeks he has been admitted to practise as an attorney and counsellor at law in the courts of the state of Missouri." (Wm. T. Porter, 1845)

THOMPSON, WILLIAM T. (1812–1882)

Georgia journalist. Reported to have been first white child born in Western Reserve; volunteer against the Seminoles; studied law; served as printer's apprentice in Philadelphia at twelve; printer in Longstreet's office of the *Sentinel,* Augusta, Georgia, 1835. Editor of several papers, Augusta *Mirror,* Southern *Miscellany, Western Continent,* Baltimore, and later the Savannah *Morning News* for which paper he secured the services of Joel Chandler Harris.

THORPE, THOMAS B. (1815–1878) ("Tom Owen, the Bee-Hunter")

Born in Massachusetts, settled in Louisiana in 1836. Painter, newspaper editor, contributor of periodical literature, Colonel in the Mexican author of numerous books, humorous sketches and about the war. Editor of the New Orleans *Daily Commercial Times* in 1845; Batesville (Ark.) *Eagle,* N. O. Daily *Tropic, National,* etc. Thorpe's painting of Zachary Taylor was hung in the state legislature of Arkansas.

APPENDIX C

HISTORICAL, BIOGRAPHICAL, CRITICAL: A SHORT SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

ALDERMAN, E. A., and SMITH, C. A., general editors

Library of Southern Literature, 17 vols., Atlanta, copyr. 1924.

DAVIDSON, JAMES W.

The Living Writers of the South, New York, 1869.

DODD, WILLIAM E.

The Cotton Kingdom, New Haven, 1919; Volume 27 of the Yale University. *Chronicles of America,* Ch. IV, Life and Literature in the Lower South, pp. 71–96, especially pp. 88–96.

HARRIS, JOEL CHANDLER

Stories of Georgia, New York, 1896. Georgia Wit and Humor, pp. 240–51.

JERDAN, WILLIAM

Yankee Humor, and Uncle Sam's Fun, London, 1853. Introduction, pp. 4–29. An important and early English appreciation of Yankee, Southern, and Western Humor.

KING, JOSEPH L. (Jr.)

Dr. George William Bagby. A Study of Virginian Literature, 1850–80. New York, 1927. Ch. IV, Washington: Journalism and Humor, pp. 53–69.

LINK, Samuel A.

Pioneers of Southern Literature, 2 vols., Nashville 1913 (*c.* 1910). Vol. II, Southern Humorists, pp. 465–549.

POE, EDGAR A.

Southern Literary Messenger, Richmond, March, 1836. Poe reviewed

Longstreet's *Georgia Scenes,* the book having come to him as he said, "anonymously and anomalously."

TANDY, JENNETTE

Cracker Box Philosophers in American Humor and Satire, New York, 1925. Ch. IV, The Development of Southern Humor, pp. 65–103.

TRENT, WILLIAM P.

A Retrospect of American Humor, in the Century Magazine for November 1901, pp. 45–64.

WADE, JOHN D.

Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, A Study of the Development of Culture in the South, New York, 1924. Ch. III, A Young Lawyer in Georgia; Ch. VI, Georgia Scenes; Ch. VII, Georgia Scenes—One by One.

WATTERSON, HENRY

Oddities in Southern Life and Character, Boston and New York, 1882. The best single work, and (so far as the writer knows) the only one that brings this field to a focus. Colonel Watterson's interpretative notes are the most significant observations in the literature; and the writer is happy to acknowledge his indebtedness.

A NOTE ON THE TYPE IN WHICH THIS BOOK IS SET

This book is set on the Linotype in Granjon, a type which is neither a copy of a classic face nor an original creation. George W. Jones drew the basic design for this type from classic sources, but deviated from his model wherever four centuries of type-cutting experience indicated an improvement or where modern methods of punch-cutting made possible a refinement that was beyond the skill of the sixteenth-century originator. This new creation is based primarily upon the type used by Claude Garamond (1510–1561) in his beautiful French books and more closely resembles the work of the founder of the Old Style letter than do any of the various modern-day types that bear his name.

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